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**A SPORTING
PARADISE .**



bird.

"H. H."

"BEGAN TO POUND HIM WITH HIS TERRIBLE FOREFEET."

Frontispiece.

[See p. 39.]

A SPORTING PARADISE

**WITH STORIES OF ADVENTURE
IN AMERICA AND THE BACK-
WOODS OF MUSKOKA . . .**

By

P. ST MICHAEL-PODMORE

M.A., F.R.G.S., F.Z.S., Etc.

**Author of "Ozunklein" (A Story of a Muskoka Seneca
Girl), Etc., Etc.**



**Illustrated
With Drawings by Harrington Bird
and from Photographs**

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P6

Dedicated

TO MY FRIEND

ANDREW LIDDELL MACLAREN

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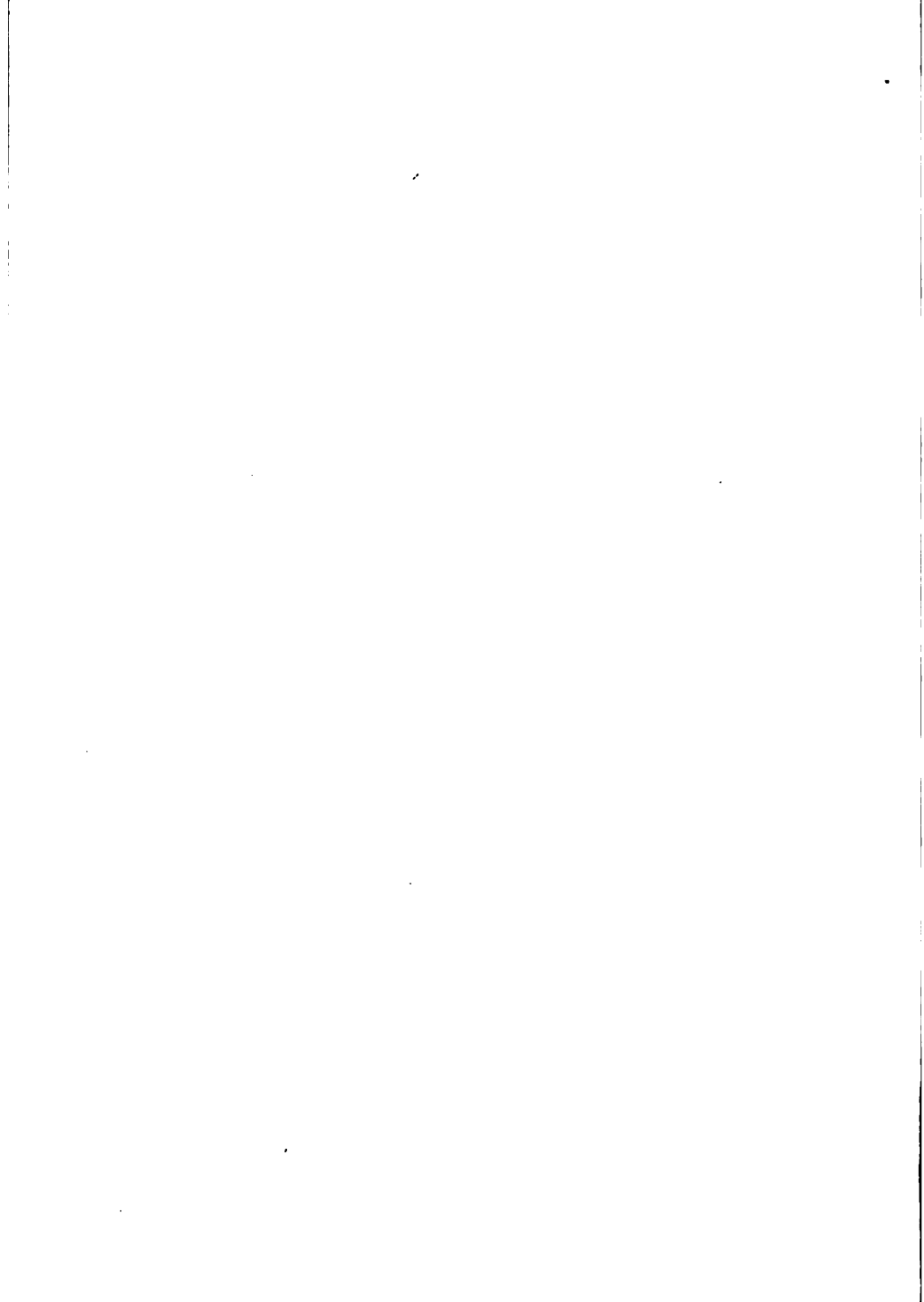
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P R E F A C E

THE object of this book is to create an interest among English Sportsmen and all lovers of Nature in little-known parts of Canada and the United States. The author has spent a considerable part of his life on the other side of the Atlantic, and knows America and the district of Muskoka well.

His mode of life abroad has often been nomadic, and such that he has been obliged to resort to primitive methods of living. To any one who would accuse him of inhumanity he would plead emphatically, "not guilty."

In the wilds a man goes out to Nature's home, seeks his own game, and stands a chance of being the victim. Here considerable skill is required, and no little knowledge of woodcraft ; often the sportsman gets what all true sportsmen like, a taste of real danger and a chance of

showing his prowess. Many stories bear out this assertion; most of them of the author's own personal experience. He cannot hold himself responsible for all the adventures related to him by trappers and others, but where the names of authorities have been given, they are sufficient guarantee.

In conclusion, the author has to acknowledge his indebtedness to President Roosevelt and others whom he has quoted. Mr. Lydekker has looked through the zoological portions of the book and is responsible for the nomenclature of it. The illustrations are by Harington Bird.

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A SPORTING PARADISE

I

THE MUSKOKA LAKES

THE Muskoka district consists of more than eight hundred lakes. These lakes represent the most picturesque region on earth. They are dotted here and there with thousands of small islands. The shores on either side are thickly wooded to the water's brink. There are quiet, secluded creeks, and uninhabited bays, and vast tracts of fertile, unclaimed lands awaiting the sportsman and the emigrant. These darksome shores, fringed to the water's edge with pine, cedar, and other evergreen, are still the continual abiding-place of deer, hares, grouse, foxes, porcupines, and fur-bearing animals; while even yet, in the more solitary wilds, the lordly moose, the wolf, and black bear are to be found.

The water-surface of these lakes on a map looks as if one had upset a bottle of green ink over the paper, and the fluid had run about the sheet in the most fantastic and self-willed fashion, circling round innumerable islands of all forms and sizes, leaving here a jutting-out point, and there making a deep and promiscuously formed indentation. I know of no lake-system which Nature has so capriciously formed. Geologically speaking, she seems to have scooped out first a hollow basin ; then to have stirred the volcanic fires underneath, which shot up an eruptive array of elevated points and dots, of every conceivable size and shape ; and, finally, to have poured a flood of water in and round about the whole, leaving only the tops of the irregular and detached masses unsubmerged. How clear, deep, and cool are these delicious fresh-water lakes ! Swarms of brook-trout, lake-trout, black bass, pickerel, and perch swim about, visible even from the shore ; while the covers and reed-beds abound with feathered game.

The lakes of Muskoka, described by me as "A Sporting Paradise," comprise a territory equal in size to that of the kingdom of Belgium. Rocks abound everywhere—indeed, four-tenths

of the country is occupied by rocks and lakes ; but both in the water and on the land the rocks jut directly up, so that alongside the base is immediately a good depth of water or of soil.

The rocks of Muskoka seem to have the faculty of nourishing trees, shrubs, and verdure, which cling to and cover their sides in a most incomprehensible manner. Between Bala and Lake Huron is a rocky waste of many thousands of acres. This is in the district of Freeman's Land, and here I heard the wolves fourteen years ago, whenever I chanced to pass near the place at sunset.

The chief Muskoka lakes comprise Lake Rosseau, Lake Joseph, and Lake Muskoka ; and Nature has provided remarkable rivers connecting these lakes, thus rendering navigation easy. The portages near Bala to the Muskosh River are only trifling—a circumstance which enables the hunter to pursue his journey by water even so far as Lake George. To the hunter this neighbourhood presents a sporting paradise, and during the autumn and summer half a million rich Americans spend their holiday here. Some have built costly residences, where they reside for a few weeks ; others

1

prefer camping out and long expeditions with Indian guides. These visitors buy every kind of farm produce gladly, and are, therefore, a godsend to the farm. Few Indians reside in this district now, but numbers of them pass through it on their way from Rama to their hunting-grounds. They are very quiet, inoffensive people, fond of jewellery and gaudy attire. They sing very sweetly, and the squaws execute some bead-work which displays great taste. It is amusing to see them glide along in their bark canoes.* The healthiness of

* *How to make a canoe.*—These canoes are not difficult to make, if one selects a tree of sufficient size from which a sheet of bark can be procured without a flaw. The directions are as follows:—Chop out proper lengths, nick the log along one side, then tenderly and carefully peel off the bark. Stick pegs into the ground to mark off the size of the canoe; then mould the sheet of bark into shape, and warm at the fire to make it soft and pliable. Then bend the gunwale of cedar wood and stitch the bark. Line with cedar splits or laths, and five transverse bars of tough wood; fasten to the gunwale to keep the canoe stiff and shapely. Caulk with pitch made of resin and grease, and the stem, stern, and other unavoidable seams hermetically seal, and be careful to have a pitch-pot in the canoe. The Indian uses an axe and crooked knife as his only tools. The paddles, which are from 6 ft. to 7 ft. in length, are made of rock maple. They should be light and springy. In paddling, the upper hand is at the extreme end, and the lower one grasps the paddle close to the blade. The farther apart the hands are held the more power can be put into the

this locality is universally acknowledged. The Indian chief Yellow Head lived to be one hundred and six years of age. He was an "honest Indian," much respected, and he continued to frequent his hunting-grounds until a few days before his death.*

The Muskoka lakes vary in size from forty miles in length to small ponds covering an acre. I have resided a year and a half in this locality, journeying through the virgin forest alone stroke. A birch-bark canoe weighs about 60 lbs., and can carry four men with ease and safety.

* *Muskoka Indians*.—Situated between the wild, uncultivated lands of forest and rock, between Lake Muskoka and Lake Huron, there are still to be found (1903) the remnant of the once powerful Seneca tribe of Indians. They have a large reserve here, and though their small clearings and feeble attempts to cultivate the soil could hardly rank them among successful Canadian farmers, yet with Government assistance and hunting parties they live very well. The Indian tribes (so often mentioned by Fenimore Cooper) are rapidly decreasing: they hasten, by natural instinct, away from the advance of so-called civilisation. There is a strange intuition that tells them "pale face gifts" mean death and degeneration. Those who stifle this warning voice and remain are generally found in disease, always undermined in physique, and lacking in the spirit of manly independence and courage. The white man and redskin people cannot amalgamate. Once upon a time the Hurons were the most dreaded nation on the American Continent, and the Iroquois, Mohican, Seneca, and Mohawk contested fiercely their supremacy over the Muskoka region.

without danger. Revisiting these lakes in 1902, I found all my old friends in a flourishing condition—log-huts had disappeared, and comfortable homes were universal, with a general atmosphere of prosperity. After travelling over old tracts, I journeyed with Mr. MacLaren (an old Cambridge friend) to Blackstone and Crane Lakes. The following, relating to Blackstone Lake, is extracted from my notes, September 2nd, 1902 :—

“The moon was shining brightly as I emerged from the bush. The trees, being very large, had partially excluded the light and rendered the way difficult. Now I stood on the low sandy shore of a wide bay. The giant pines and hemlocks cast their dark shadows upon the sparkling water. Several large islands were visible in the distance. The nearest island lay on the left : there possibly a she-bear was guarding her cubs ; the sweet odour of raspberries, huckleberries, and other fruits suggested this conclusion. No sound, save the croaking of bull-frogs, broke the silence. Opposite to the island was a long, rocky, projecting, bridge-like cape, almost reaching to its shores. I paddled on, avoiding this spot, and proceeded in the direction of a huge

bluff. I continued on for half an hour, and then entered into a dark shadow cast by a rocky island about 200 ft. in height. These rocks were many tons in weight and piled irregularly. Between their crevices trees had taken root, and added to their mysterious grandeur. Here was a natural fortress; and if I could once ascend, nothing without wings could pass me unobserved. The rocks were perpendicular on the western side, and the huge blocks above appeared like houses tumbled indiscriminately one upon the other. I walked round the island, and discovered, growing to the water's edge, a dense copse of small trees, which afforded me a way to the heights above. Here a splendid view revealed other islands close by."

My note on Crane Lake, written at the time of my last visit, September 3rd, 1902, is as follows :—

"No emigrant has penetrated thus far into Nature's own domain. The sound of no woodman's axe has ever rung through these forest glades. The earth, as the Great Hand framed and fashioned it, is here. No ordinary painter's brush or pen could do justice to this beautiful

bay, where I recline in my boat, gazing upon wooded isles, forest, creek, and rock. The shores on the left are low and swampy, and a natural river has for ages drained the hills above. The beavers once chose this spot for a site, and their dam and hive-shaped domes can be faintly seen. On the right hand is a crescent-shaped sandy beach, and farther on huge black rocks lean over, as though threatening to crush out the life of any living creature that may seek a shelter beneath. Here the water, from continual friction, has hollowed out a natural cavern. This is perhaps the most cherished place in Crane Lake for a deer-run. The long wooded peninsula that joins the beaver-swamp extends into the lake for nearly a mile; and when the stag breaks cover, he has no other choice than to proceed along this narrow strip of land, or to plunge into the waters of the bay. As night approaches, I hear the sound of some heavy animal forcing a way through the thick undergrowth which borders the beaver-swamp. A wolf rounds the point, but passes swiftly on, intent upon following the strong scent of a deer. A fox skulks beneath the shadow of the rocks, watching a large hare that has

left his shelter, and is feeding upon some rich, tender grass. Soon an unwary movement causes alarm, and with four bounds* he has nearly gone ; but now, for a moment, he stops, his ears are erect, and every instinct is alert. Then, as though conscious of approaching danger, he slowly vanishes. Now I hear a heavy splash, and, looking round, perceive a stag swimming from an island to the mainland. As he reaches the shore and shakes the dripping water from

* The northern hare (*Lepus americanus*), like most others of the genus, seeks its food only by night or in the early part of the evening. To this habit it is more exclusively confined in autumn and winter. During the spring and summer I have frequently observed them in the morning cautiously proceeding along some solitary by-path of the forest. Two or three may often be seen associated together, appearing full of playfulness and activity. When disturbed, they sometimes stamp upon the ground, making a noise so loud that it can be heard at some distance ; then with four bounds they reach the thicket, sitting with ears erect, seemingly listening to ascertain whether they are pursued. It occasionally retires to the same cover for a number of nights in succession ; but this habit is by no means common, though there is no other species of hare so attached to particular and beaten paths through the woods. I have frequently caught three or four in one night with a simple wire noose placed over his path. Their weight averages about 5 lbs. or 6 lbs. ; the length varying from 16 in. When pursued, he runs so swiftly and struggles so hard to escape, that sometimes he dies from these exertions.

his flanks, he stands for a moment with turned head, displaying his handsome antlers. Now the crash and snapping twigs announce the approach of a huge black bear, forcing his way through the bush, to quench his thirst in the cool waters of the lake. As I paddle to camp, and turn a sharp bend of the islands, a wild duck, with low agitated flight, hastens with her young brood out of the reach of danger."

The best time to emigrate to Muskoka,* is April. In order to get a crop in during the first year, one week will be required to select

* "Muskoka." The origin of this name, as is the case with all names originating from Indian sources, is hidden in mystery, and subject to different opinions. Some assert it is derived from the Indian word "Musquo-tah," signifying "red ground," probably owing to its rusty iron and ochre-coloured sediments, which may be seen in the soils of many of the fields, and around the banks of some of the streamlets; others, that its meaning is that of the "Clear-sky-land," a worthy description of this sporting paradise. Personally I am of opinion that Muskoka was named after the Missasaga chief who used to hunt in this neighbourhood. This chief's name is spelt sometimes "Mesqua-Okee." He is believed to have been a gallant warrior and a bold hunter, whose renown spread through the surrounding country. The home of his tribe was by the shores of Lake Ontario; and little was it supposed, when he sought sport and recreation in this inland home of game, that he was leading the way for so many others to follow exactly in his footsteps in our later and modern days.

a location, another to erect a log-house ; then follows the clearing of some land, and chopping the same. It is not to be expected that much can be done the first season, but by a little exertion sufficient roots and vegetables may be grown for family use, and even some oats and peas raised. A pioneer-settler informed me that he had sown grain crops and planted potatoes as late as the last of June, and had had a good return ; but the month of May is preferable. English people, of course, have no idea of the rapidity with which crops mature in this country, especially in new land.

My advice is to make direct for Toronto, *via* Montreal. Upon arrival procure lists of unoccupied lots, and make a thorough examination of the land before locating. A man requires a capital of at least £100 clear of expenses of travel. Some places are entirely free from stone, with 70 per cent. fit for cultivation. The soil is sandy loam. The timber is mixed with a good deal of hardwood. Crane Lake would offer exceptional advantages to strong young men. During my fortnight here we averaged 30 lbs. of fish daily. These fish consisted of black bass, green bass, pickerel, and maskinonge.

Some weighed over 5 lbs. The waters of this lake are deliciously cool and pure throughout the year, and to strong men a journey down this lake to Lake Huron is a delightful trip. A natural river connects Blackstone and Crane Lakes, and a waggon-road has been made from the former to Parry Sound.

The route most direct to Crane Lake would be by train from Toronto to Parry Sound, and then by waggon (five miles) to Blackstone Lake. It would be well for several young people to emigrate together, and, above all things, to avoid communicating their plans, destination, or amount of capital. To prevent disappointment, a small boat should be purchased at Parry Sound, and a carrier or waggon hired for a few days. I should advise the emigrant to proceed immediately to Crane Lake. A river will be found at the extreme end of Blackstone facing Jennings's Clearing, and some excellent pieces of land on the opposite shores facing Blackstone River. Should nothing here be considered suitable, the explorer might proceed to Little Blackstone Lake and Pine Lake.

To sportsmen merely on pleasure bent, my advice would be to select the following route :

Book from England for Gravenhurst *via* Montreal and Toronto. Take one of the Muskoka Navigation Company's steamers to Port Sanfield, and spend the night at the Prospect House Hotel. Mr. Cox, the proprietor, is an excellent sportsman, and will render valuable assistance. Next day, proceed to Port Cockburn, having previously telegraphed for a team to meet the boat for conveyance to Blackstone, Crane, and other inland lakes. This matter can be left with Mr. Cox, if he receives a letter a few days beforehand. I may add that neither beer, wine, nor spirits can be procured on the boats, though the food provided is good. A guide's fee is rarely less than ten shillings per day. I can strongly recommend the farmer's sons at the river-end of Blackstone Lake. One of these sons would meet the boat at Port Cockburn if he received a message in time. Fish are so plentiful in these lakes that a good catch is certain, even to indifferent sportsmen. We found green frogs were readily taken, but pickerel prefer small fry. The frogs are hooked through the mouth, and swim naturally in the water. On a good day the fish strike immediately the line is cast.

In conclusion, I may add that Toronto is an

excellent place for provisions, wines, and spirits ;
and a carefully stored hamper containing whisky,
hams, tinned meats, cheese, biscuits, etc., will be
found almost necessary.

II

THE MOOSE

Alces machlis

DURING my explorations in Muskoka and the north, I have had a good opportunity of studying the moose (*Alces machlis*) while living in its natural haunts. The name "moose" is derived from "moosa," an Indian word meaning wood-eater. The animal is so called because its food consists chiefly of twigs and the bark of young trees, rather than herbs and grasses: its short neck renders grazing difficult, and is rarely resorted to.

Moose are distinctly forest-loving animals, and live only in wooded countries where the winters are long and severe. They have always been less numerous in the west than in the extreme east, where the forest and lakes are singularly well fitted to their habits, and it is there that they are still hunted with the most success.

The fall, or autumn, is the best time of the year to hunt the moose. The weather at this season is bright, clear, and bracing; I doubt if any climate can compare with the district of the Canadian lakes during September. This is the rutting time of the moose; and the hunter imitating the amorous roars of the cow, which she utters periodically to make known her whereabouts to the bull, can with care and patience usually get a good shot. From September 20th to October 20th is the season for moose-calling, and the full of the moon is the best time, as the bulls seldom come up to call before sunset. The most successful hour is between sundown and dark. The animal is not difficult to kill, but requires to be hit in the right spot. Moose are very pugnacious in the rutting season, and fight desperately. During the summer of 1889 I discovered the skeletons of two bulls with their huge antlers locked in death. Only once did I catch a glimpse of a fight between two bull moose, and the following is a quotation from my remarks upon the subject:—

“An analogy we may find among the huge boulders on yonder hills, that surround an

inland lake some three miles distant. There, with antlers locked and united for ever, are two huge bull moose. The first challenge came from this very bay. It was answered: the voice was madly pursued, until confronting him in this desolate spot stood the king of the forest, eager for the fray.

“They fought with equal madness. The shock of their charge seemed to vibrate through the forest: from their lips fell a foam, and from their eyes darted forth red streams of fire. Their thick, massive shoulders hardly quivered when the flesh was gored and torn. The breath came from their broad nostrils like steam escaping from a vent. Such a combat could not last. How well matched they are! It is difficult to accede to the one or the other an advantage of one ounce of weight or an inch of height.

“See! they have broken loose from that last, long contact, and each has withdrawn as though the laurels of victory cannot be won. They stand panting and waiting, each expectant of the other. It is for the last charge. How noble they look even in their ferocity, gathering up those strong muscles, with head erect to

bellow forth those terrible sounds that can be heard for miles!

"The dust and decayed vegetable matter whirl once more in a dense cloud, and those savage warriors have charged for the last time. They strain, force, and dash each other viciously forward; wounds gape wider, blood spouts afresh in crimson trickles; their narrow sides swell as though bursting under that tremendous effort. Now they tremble, they totter, they sway, they fall! They can rise no more! Their antlers are locked, and cannot be freed! Thus they must starve, or become a prey to the ever-watchful wolf!"

Mr. Long gives an outline of an encounter between two bull moose that may be compared with my own experience, both with reference to the locality where these fights take place and the struggle itself.

"Far up on the mountain-side the sharp, challenging grunt of a master bull broke out of the startled woods in one of the lulls of our exciting play. Simms heard, and turned in the bow to whisper excitedly: 'Nother bull! Fetch-um ol' Dev'l this time, sartin.' Raising his horn, he gave the long, rolling bellow

of a cow moose. A fiercer trumpet-call from the mountain-side answered ; then the sound was lost in the crash, the crash of the first two bulls, as they broke out upon the shore on opposite sides of the canoe.

"We gave little heed now to the nearer play ; our whole attention was fixed on a hoarse, grunting roar—uh, uh, uh ! erryuh ! r-r-r-runk-unk !—with a rattling, snapping crash of underbrush for an accompaniment. The young bull heard it, listened for a moment, like a great black statue under the moonlight, then he glided away into the shadows under the bank.

"The larger bull heard it and came swinging along the shore, hurling a savage challenge back on the echoing woods at every stride.

"There was an ominous silence up on the ridge where a moment before all was fierce commotion. Simms was silent too ; the uproar had been appalling (*vide* 'with head erect to bellow forth those terrible sounds'), with the sleeping lake below us, and the vast forest, where silence dwells at home, stretching up and away on every hand to the sky line. But the spirit of mischief was tingling all over me as I seized the horn and gave the low, appealing

grunt that a cow would have uttered under the same circumstances. Like a shot the answer was hurled back, and down came the great bull—smash, crack, r-r-runk! till he burst like a tempest out on the open shore, where the second bull with a challenging roar leaped to meet him.

“Simms was begging me to shoot, shoot, telling me excitedly that ‘Ol’ Dev’l,’ as he called him, would be more dangerous now than ever, if I let him get away; but I only drove the canoe in closer to the splashing, grunting uproar among the shadows under the bank.

“There was a terrific duel underway when I swung the canoe alongside a moment later. The bulls crashed together with a shock to break their heads. Mud and water flew over them (*vide* the dust and decayed vegetable matter whirl once more in a dense cloud); their great antlers clashed and rang like metal blades, as they pushed and tugged, grunting like demons in the fierce struggle. But the contest was too one-sided to last long. Ol’ Dev’l had smashed down from the mountain-side in a frightful rage, and with a power that nothing could resist. With a quick lunge he locked antlers in the grip he wanted; a twist of his massive neck and shoulders

forcing the opposing head aside, and a mighty spring of his crouching haunches finished the work. The second bull went over with a plunge like a bolt-struck pine. As he rolled up to his feet again the savage old bull jumped for him, and drove the brown antlers into his flanks. The next moment both bulls had crashed away into the woods, one swinging off in giant strides through the cracking under-brush for his life, the other close behind, charging like a battering-ram into his enemy's rear, grunting like a huge wild boar in his rage and exultation. So the chase vanished over the ridge into the valley beyond; and silence stole back, like a Chinese empress, into her disturbed dominions."

A deer when started by a hunter, or driven by hounds, usually returns in a few days to the hill or mountain-side where he was first found; but a moose when thoroughly alarmed will start on a long, swinging walk, and, taking with him his entire family, leave for good. Moose-signs are unmistakable, and the marks where they have yarded show for years. The moose, while totally lacking the grace and ease of the movement of the deer, is appallingly grand as he stands swinging his immense antlers like

feathers as he turns to catch a taint in the breeze. In the rutting season, when they are at their best, the body is rusty-black, and the legs greyish. The shoulders and broad chest show tremendous strength, and the hips are stout and clean-cut ; but the great height of a moose is owing chiefly to his long legs and bristly mane. The nostrils in repose are in a collapsed state. The ears come above the horns, not behind, as is usually the case in mounted specimens. In the living animal the nose is a marvel of ugliness, and the surface covered by the olfactory nerves so great that it is doubtful whether there is any other animal whose sense of smell is so highly developed. Like most denizens of the forest, the moose relies far more on its scent than on its sight. The eyes are small and wicked, snapping and gleaming on the slightest provocation, and betray at once the ugly character of their owner. When captured young, moose prove most interesting pets, and become very tame. A gentleman in Toronto succeeded in training a pair of moose to drive as a team, and the distance they covered in a short space was something remarkable. In confinement they are dangerous from a trick they have of striking

with their fore-feet, not straight out as a horse sometimes strikes, but first lifting the hoof almost perpendicularly above their head and then cutting forward and down, a blow that would tear a man nearly in two. A large bull generally weighs one thousand pounds, and they are sometimes killed weighing from twelve hundred to fifteen hundred pounds.

The moose is a local race of the elk of Northern Europe. Unlike other animals that live in these Northern temperatures it does not change its coat in winter to blend with Nature's garb as do the caribou, Virginian deer, etc.

Mr. J. Rowan thus describes the introduction to a battle between two bull moose :—

“I was calling in a little barren or open space in the woods, and during a quarter of an hour of breathless suspense I could hear two bulls advancing towards me from different directions, and both so near that it was a toss-up which would come first. At last one fellow came out into the open, and stood defiantly awaiting the approach of his rival, whom he could plainly hear rampaging through the neighbouring thicket.” On another occasion he writes : “A wounded bull charged me repeatedly, in

a most determined but rather blundering way. Fortunately I was in the woods, and had no difficulty in avoiding his attacks by dodging round the trees. Had it been in the open, I might not have fared so well."

The call of a cow, which the hunter imitates through a horn or trumpet made of birch-bark, is a series of grunts or groans winding up with a prolonged, dismal, and rather unearthly roar, which in calm weather can be distinctly heard at a distance of two or three miles. One peculiarity of the moose is that for a great distance he can go straight to the spot from whence the call proceeds, even after a considerable time has elapsed, and without a repetition of the sound to guide him; and hunters, after failing in their call during the previous evening, have known a moose come straight to the place on the following morning. It is considered best to call from a canoe, as many moose are lost by crossing the hunter's tracks. They walk at the rate of four miles an hour, even in woods so thick that it is hard to understand how they get their horns through. They carry their heads high, noses well up, and horns thrown back. The horns have been known to measure 6 ft.

In July these horns are soft, but in August they rub off the velvet against the bushes, and in September they are in full bloom. The cows have generally two calves in the month of May, which remain with their mothers for one year and then go off on their own account.

The moose is about the size of a large horse. The head is very large ; snout and ears, long ; neck, short, with a thick mane. Horns spreading into a broad palm ; tail, short ; the colour is blackish-grey. The teeth are white ; horns brownish-yellow, the extremities of the prongs becoming yellowish-white. The eyes are black ; nose, forehead, and upper lip, yellowish-fawn ; inner surface of the ears, yellowish-white ; outer surface, greyish-brown. Sides of head, yellowish-brown. Hairs on the appendage under the throat, black ; lower lip and chin, dark grey, formed of a mixture of black and white hairs.

Major Smith, who was a close observer and naturalist of considerable attainments, says :—

“For us, who have the opportunity of receiving the animal in all the glory of his full-grown horns, amid the scenery of his own wilderness, no animal could appear more majestic or more imposing. It is, however, the aggregate of his

appearance which produces this effect: for when the proportions of its structure are considered in detail, they certainly will seem destitute of that harmony of parts which in the imagination produces the feeling of beauty. *The Quadrupeds of North America* (Audubon and Buchman) contains the following: 'They feed on the water-plants, or browse upon the trees fringing the shores. In the winter they retire to the dry mountain ridges, and generally "yard,"* as it is termed, on the side facing the south, where there are abundance of maple and other hardwood trees upon which to feed, either by browsing on the tender twigs or peeling off the bark from the stems of such as are only 3 or 4 inches in diameter.'

Although moose swim well, they are not known to dive; they swim with the head and

* A "yard" is not, as some people seem to suppose, a trampled-down space, with definite limits; the yard is merely the spot which a moose has chosen for its winter home, because it contains plenty of browse in the shape of young trees and saplings, and perhaps also because it is sheltered to some extent from the fiercest winds and heaviest snow-drifts. The animal travels across this space in straight lines and irregular circles after food, treading in its own footsteps where practicable. As the snow deepens these lines of travel become beaten paths. If the snow is very light, moose do not yard at all; but in a hard winter they begin to yard in December

part of the neck above water, like cattle. When pursued in boats they frequently attempt to upset them, and at times open their mouths and make a loud snorting noise, striking at the same time with their forefeet, and occasionally sink the canoes of the Indians or hunters. Upon one occasion, a young man going fishing, and having his fowling-piece, on turning a point of a lake, saw a large moose in the water and fired at it with shot, tickling it severely. The moose at once made for the canoe; and whilst the alarmed fisherman was attempting to escape, his boat became entangled in the branches of a fallen tree, when he was forced to give up the canoe and get away as he best could; the animal on reaching the boat completely demolished it. Unfortunately the females are sometimes killed when they are with calf. They do not generally make any noise in the woods, unless when provoked, but in captivity they utter a plaintive sound.

The procedure for shooting moose is sometimes as follows: The nearest man takes a decided aim, as nearly as possible under the forearm and through the neck, and fires, or, if fronting the beast, in the centre of the breast.

If wounded only, the second hunter fires also, and perhaps the third, and the animal succumbs at last, though it sometimes manages to run, stumble, and scramble for miles.

American Animals, published in 1903, contains the following useful information :—

“During the rutting season, which occurs in the autumn, the old bulls become savage and fearless, roaming the forest on moonlight nights, whistling and calling fiercely and clashing their antlers against trees as a challenge. The cow moose answers with a lower call, which the hunters imitate through birch-bark trumpets, in order to call the bull within gunshot.

“When enticed in this manner, the bull is likely to come upon the hunter with a blind rush, and in the darkness of the wood the hunter, whose nerves are liable to fail him at a pinch, may find this sort of sport exciting, but not altogether safe.”

Mr. Frederic Irland writes :—

“The camp was on the Crooked Deadwater by the side of a beautiful stream at the head of a great river. Just across the narrow waterway one of the grandest mountains in New Brunswick rises sheer and dark, a great pyramid of eternal

verdure, which in the winter is the feeding-ground of hundreds of moose. It was into this inviting camp that we stumbled long after dark, scaring a little moose out of the small clearing, not 200 ft. from the cabin door. The frost came down and cracked the trees that night till they popped with the cold, and the sound was like a skirmish of rifles. The next morning when we awoke there was a thin glaze on the snow, and when we walked abroad it was like treading on innumerable panes of crackling window-glass. We heard three different moose get up and run when we were a quarter of a mile off. . . . We climbed the mountain for an hour. Then we came to the tracks of two moose, fresh that very morning. The footprints were not extra large, but the broken twigs on two trees showed where a pair of antlers had scraped on either side, and I could scarcely touch the two trees at one time with my outstretched hands. Moose with big horns do not always have large hoofs.

“‘They lie down about this time in the morning’ said my guide, . . . and after a while, over the top of a fallen tree-trunk, I saw the mane of a great, black animal. The old fellow had

not seen us yet. He swings his great horns just a little, the steam rises from his broad nostrils. Lazily he winks his eye. I can see every hair upon his back. Carefully I push the camera above the prostrate tree-trunk, first brushing the snow away with my hand. Tick, goes the shutter and the great beast is getting up. The antlers swing, he rises two feet at a time, like an ox, hesitates an instant, as a moose always does, shows the little symptoms of fright so familiar to those who know the habits of the moose, and then goes down the mountains like a runaway locomotive."

Mr. Irland's remarks about the frost attacking the trees recalls one of my own experiences in 1890. The sun was still shining in the skies, though the wind had become very cold and penetrating. Occasionally, as the temperature fell lower and lower, there would sound from the depths of the wood a startling noise, like the crack of a rifle, and I felt my heart throb tumultuously with excitement. As evening approached these cracks became louder and more frequent, until a roar, as of artillery, echoed through the forest. These tremendous noises resulted from the frost attacking the giant trees.

"The broad valley and mountain banks of the Klondike," writes Tappan Adney, "are an admirable feeding-ground for the moose. The temperature in winter is exceedingly cold and crisp, but the snow-fall is light, and by reason of the intense cold the snow does not settle or pack. There is so little wind, especially through the early part of the winter, that the snow accumulates on the trees in strange and often fantastic masses, giving the landscape, especially on the mountain-tops, the appearance of having been chiselled out of pure white marble. On account of its lightness, the snow is no impediment to the long-legged gaunt moose, which is not obliged to 'yard' as in more southern deep-snow regions, but wanders at will from valley to mountain-top in search of the tender twigs of willow, white birch, and cotton-wood. The Indians surround the moose in its feeding-grounds, and as it runs, one or more of them is tolerably sure of a quick shot."

The moose in this neighbourhood has long been the main support of the Indians, and in their household economy no portion of the beast is wasted. To quote further:—

"The hides were brought indoors, the hair was

shaved off, and all the sinew and meat adhering were removed by means of a sort of chisel made of the moose's shin-bone. The skin was now washed in a pan of hot water. The tanning of the hide by the squaws is done the next summer. The various portions of the moose were divided among the village. One family got the head, another a slab of ribs, another the fore-shoulders. The shin-bones were roasted and cracked for their marrow; the ears, though nothing but cartilage, were roasted and chewed up; the rubber-like muffle, or nose, and every particle of flesh, fat, or gristle that could be scraped from head to hoofs, were disposed of. Even the stomach was emptied of its contents, boiled, and eaten."

Though I have included the moose among the big game of Muskoka, having frequently come into personal contact with it, yet I should consider that the State of Maine was "the sporting paradise" for moose.

President Roosevelt gives a graphic description of moose-hunting as follows:—

"Later in the fall I was again hunting among the lofty ranges which continue towards the south-east, the chain of the Bitter Root, between Idaho

and Montana. There were but two of us, and we were travelling very light, each having but one pack-pony, and the saddle animal he bestrode. We were high among the mountains, and followed no regular trail. Hence our course was one of extreme difficulty. Occasionally we took our animals through the forest near timber line, where the slopes were not too steep ; again we threaded our way through a line of glades, or skirted the foot hills, in an open, park country ; and now and then we had to cross stretches of tangled forest making but a few miles a day, at the cost of incredible toil, and accomplishing even this solely by virtue of the wonderful docility and sure-footedness of the ponies, and of my companion's skill with the axe and thorough knowledge of woodcraft.

“ Late one cold afternoon we came out in a high Alpine valley in which there was no sign of any man's ever having been before us. Down its middle ran a clear brook. On each side was a belt of thick spruce forest, covering the lower flanks of the mountains. The trees came down in points and isolated clumps to the brook, the banks of which were thus bordered with open glades, rendering the travel easy and rapid.

"Soon after starting up this valley we entered a beaver-meadow of considerable size. It was covered with bush and rank grass, and the stream wound through it rather sluggishly in long curves, which were fringed by a thick growth of dwarfed willows. In one or two places it broadened into small ponds, bearing a few lily-pods. This meadow had been all trampled up by moose. Trails led hither and thither through the grass, the willow-twigs were cropped off, and the muddy banks of the little black ponds were indented by hoof-marks. Evidently most of the lilies had been plucked. The footprints were unmistakable ; a moose's foot is longer and slimmer than a caribou's, while, on the other hand, it is much larger than an elk's, and more oval in shape.

"Most of the sign was old, this high Alpine meadow, surrounded by snow mountains, having clearly been a favourite resort for moose in the summer ; but some enormous fresh tracks told that one or more old bulls were still frequenting the place.

"The light was already fading, and, of course, we did not wish to camp where we were, because we would then certainly scare the moose. Accordingly we pushed up the valley for another

mile, through an open forest, the ground being quite free from under-brush and dead timber, and covered with a carpet of thick moss, in which the feet sank noiselessly. Then we came to another beaver-meadow, which offered fine feed for the ponies. On its edge we hastily pitched camp, just at dusk. We tossed down the packs in a dry grove, close to the brook, and turned the tired ponies loose in the meadow, hobbling the little mare that carried the bell. The ground was smooth. We threw a cross-pole from one to the other of two young spruces which happened to stand handily, and from it stretched and pegged out a piece of canvas, which we were using as a shelter tent. Beneath this we spread our bedding, laying under it the canvas sheets in which it had been wrapped. There was still bread left over from yesterday's baking, and in a few moments the kettle was boiling and the frying-pan sizzling, while one of us skinned and cut into suitable pieces two grouse we had knocked over on our march. For fear of frightening the moose we built but a small fire, and went to bed soon after supper, both being tired and cold.

"At dawn I was awake, and crawled out of my

buffalo-bag, shivering and yawning. My companion still slumbered heavily. White frost covered whatever had been left outside. The cold was sharp, and I hurriedly slipped a pair of stout moccasins on my feet, drew on my gloves and cap, and started through the ghostly woods for the meadow where we had seen the moose sign. The tufts of grass were stiff with frost; black ice skimmed the edges and quiet places of the little brook.

“I walked slowly, though it was difficult not to make a noise of cracking sticks or brushing against trees in the gloom: but the forest was so open that it favoured me. When I reached the edge of the beaver-meadow it was light enough to shoot, though the front sight still glimmered indistinctly. Streaks of cold red showed that the sun would soon rise.

“Before leaving the shelter of the last spruces I halted to listen; and almost immediately heard a curious splashing sound from the middle of the meadow, where the brook broadened into small willow-bordered pools. I knew at once that a moose was in one of these pools, wading about and pulling up the water-lilies by seizing their slippery stems in his lips, plunging his

head deep under the water to do so. The moose love to feed in this way in the hot months, when they spend all the time they can in the water, feeding or lying down; nor do they altogether abandon the habit even when the weather is so cold that icicles form in their shaggy coats.

"Crouching, I stole noiselessly along the edge of the willow thicket. The stream twisted through it from side to side in zigzags, so that every few rods I got a glimpse down a lane of black water. In a minute I heard a slight splashing near me; and on passing the next point of bushes I saw the shadowy outline of the moose's hind-quarters, standing in a bend of the water. In a moment he walked onwards, disappearing. I ran forward a couple of rods, and then turned in among the willows, to reach the brook, where it again bent back towards me. The splashing in the water, and the rustling of the moose's body against the frozen twigs, drowned the little noise made by my moccasined feet.

"I strode out on the bank at the lower end of a long narrow pool of water, dark and half frozen. In this pool, half-way down and facing me, but

a score of yards off, stood the mighty marsh beast, strange and uncouth in look as some monster surviving over the Pliocene. His vast bulk loomed black and vague in the dim grey dawn ; his huge antlers stood out sharply ; columns of steam rose from his nostrils. For several seconds he fronted me motionless ; then he began to turn, slowly, and as if he had a stiff neck. When quarter-way round I fired into his shoulder : whereat he reared and bounded on the bank with a great leap, vanishing in the willows. Through these I heard him crash like a whirlwind for a dozen rods ; then down he fell, and when I reached the spot he had ceased to struggle. The ball had gone through his heart."

An old hunter told President Roosevelt the following story of an encounter with a bull moose which terminated fatally.

"He was hunting near the Cœur d'Alene Mountains with a mining prospector named Pingree ; both were originally from New Hampshire. Late in November there came a heavy fall of snow, deep enough to soon bring a deer to a standstill, although not so deep as to hamper a moose's movements. The men bound on their skis and started to the borders of a lake to kill

some blacktail. In the thicket close to the lake's brink they suddenly came across a bull moose ; a lean old fellow still savage from the rut. Pingree, who was nearest, fired at and wounded him ; whereupon he rushed straight at the man, knocked him down before he could turn round, and began to pound him with his terrible forefeet. Summoned by his comrade's despairing cries, Purvis rushed round the thickets, and shot the squealing trampling monster through the body, and immediately after had to swing himself up a small tree to avoid its furious rush. The moose did not turn after this charge but kept straight on, and was not seen again. The wounded man was past all help, for his chest was beaten in, and he died in a couple of hours."

Leith Adams describes, in his *Field and Forest Rambles*, the hunting of the moose on the snow-crust :—

"I made for the wood with all speed and had just gained the moose yard when a female came crashing through the cover, and passed within a few yards of me, pursued by the dogs, who, running nimbly on the frozen crust, hung about her flanks, yelping and barking, whilst she was making laborious efforts to escape. Now

and then she suddenly sank to the shoulders ; again her hind-quarters would almost disappear ; sometimes I lost sight of the pursued and pursuers, as the former doubled backwards and forwards in the denser parts of the woods, where the snow was not so heavy as in the barren and along its skirts. Twice or oftener I came within easy distance and was reproached for not firing, and perhaps had I known the sufferings in store for the poor brute I might have been induced then and there to put an end to the chase ; but having that morning made a secret vow not to shoot at a hind, I was obdurate, nor did his request to borrow my gun meet with consent. So, shouldering his axe with redoubled energy, Brown pushed forward, and once I saw him raise it, and as suddenly lower the weapon as the animal twisted and turned in a clump of pine saplings. He had, in fact, lost a good chance of braining the moose or breaking its spine, and now, over-excited by the chase and dead beat by extra exertion, he had no alternative but to give in. Being myself fairly out of breath, I hung back also ; and as we were both moving leisurely along, there appeared the two wardens, who had lost the tracks in attempting to cut off the animal's

retreat. But now the hounds were in full cry, and the moose well-nigh worn out, it seemed only a matter of time to get up with our quarry ; we accordingly followed the footprints, which were painfully distinct from the blood of the wounds inflicted by the dogs, or made by the frozen crust. Here I noticed large gouts where she had halted for a moment, or a gory pit caused by her nose, when in her struggles she had suddenly sunk to the brisket and buried the muzzle, or where mouthfuls of snow had been seized to slake thirst and cool the parched tongue. I must, however, allow that the chase was exciting, and had it been a male I should have enjoyed the fun immensely ; but considering the circumstances I could not enter heart and soul into the hunt in the same way as my companions, who, now worked up to the very extreme of venatical frenzy, were madly rushing on regardless of all obstacles.

“It is the most perplexing moment to the Canadian hunter when, in hot pursuit, he happens to strike the tip of his unwieldy snow-shoe against a snag, and is sent ‘a cropper, spread-eagle fashion,’ on his face, the long snow-shoes standing on end. If not an expert at recovering

himself, he may have to roll about for some time before gaining the erect position. Indeed, it so happened, for as we sped along in single-file, the two wardens leading, an accident of this nature occurred to the blacksmith, whose gun went off at the same time, lodging its contents close at his companion's heel !

"The number of pursuers was now reduced to Brown and the other moose warden, whilst the son of Vulcan and myself were left breathless in the rear. However, not to be altogether outstripped, we redoubled our efforts once more, and after a series of 'trips' arrived at the brink of a stream, when my companion, without a moment's hesitation, leaped on the snow-covered ice, and as quickly disappeared up to the armpits—gun and all. Thus reduced to his axe, he struggled on, whilst I cautiously made my way to the opposite side, and in a trice was standing by a thicket of pine-trees, where lay the poor moose breathless and exhausted, with the dogs crowding around so closely that the warden was afraid to fire."

Hunting moose "on the crust" to my mind is not sport, but brutality—and I believe every true sportsman agrees with me. The season for

deer, elk, moose, reindeer, and caribou was from October 15th to December 15th, now it commences in November.

President Roosevelt gives the following valuable hints to sportsmen :—

“An elk often hesitates in the first moments of surprise and fright, and does not get really underway for 200 or 300 yards ; but when fairly started he may go several miles, even though mortally wounded : therefore the hunter, after his first shot, should run forward as fast as he can, and shoot again and again until the quarry drops. In this way many animals that would otherwise be lost are obtained, especially by the man who has a repeating-rifle. Nevertheless the hunter should beware of being led astray by the ease with which he can fire half a dozen shots from his repeater ; and he should aim as carefully with each shot as if it were his last. No possible rapidity of fire can atone for carelessness of aim with the first shot.”

Mr. Roosevelt thus describes his killing of a giant moose :—

“Thirty yards off, behind a clump of pinjons, stood a huge bull, his head thrown back as he rubbed his shoulders with his horns. There were

several cows around him, and one saw me immediately, and took alarm. I fired into the bull's shoulder, inflicting a mortal wound: but he went off, and I raced after him at top speed, firing twice into his flank; then he stopped, very sick, and I broke his neck with a fourth bullet."

Since writing this chapter I have had the pleasure of reading Mr. William J. Long's *School of the Woods*, published 1903. Mr. Long is a true naturalist, and the few words of his preface are facts beyond question. "They are life-studies, and include also some of the unusual life-secrets of a score of animals and birds—shy, wild creatures, mostly—that hide from the face of man and make their nests or their lairs deep in the heart of the wilderness."

Nature's school knows but one language, and speaks to her pupil with an infallible voice. I would not venture to compare myself with Mr. Long, yet strangely a true harmony and agreement exist between us, though we have never met, and our opinions and observations are probably unknown to each other. We are, however, children of the woods. We have listened to the sweet music of Nature's voice,

we have not turned a deaf ear when she has spoken, nor shut our eyes when the Great Book of Life was opened, and page after page turned that we might read. "Personally," he writes, "after many years of watching animals in their native haunts, I am convinced that instinct plays a smaller part than we have supposed: that an animal's success or failure in the ceaseless struggle for life depends, not upon instinct, but upon the kind of training which the animal receives from its mother. And the more I see of children, the more sure am I that heredity plays but a small part in the child's history and destiny."

In an article in *The Zoologist* (4th Ser. vol. vii. Nov. 1903), "The Hybridisation of *Columba Palumbus*," I have described the effects of training and domestication upon the instincts of a very wild bird: "This bird has shown much attachment to me, cooing at the sound of my voice, and flying to my hand or shoulder when summoned by a signal. He is the most affectionate bird I have ever possessed." Writing to *The Feathered World* last July, I expressed myself as follows: "A bird reared from the nest at eight or nine days' old will invariably

remain tame for life if proper care and kindness are used. Birds reared from placing wood-pigeons' eggs under domestic pigeons are always useless, as they become so wild that in my case I have been obliged to destroy them. The same thing applies to birds that have been reared when the feathers have developed. They may become fairly tame during the process of daily feeding and handling, but immediately they become independent it will be found that they revert to their original type, or, in other words, the early lessons of the parents are remembered and obeyed. . . . The enclosed rough sketch was painted by me a few days since. During my labours the bird sat by my side on the table, frequently pecking at the paint-brush and materials. Whenever he became restless the movements of the hand successfully quieted him, and he remained for an hour preening his feathers, and cooing to my voice throughout the whole time."

Loyola, writes Long, said in substance : " Give me a child till he is seven years old, and it matters not much who has him afterwards. He is mine for time and eternity." Substitute seven days with birds and seven weeks with animals

for seven years, and "you have an inkling of the unconscious thought which governs every little mother in the wilderness."

Camping out in the snow, in a climate where the mercury frequently falls during December and January ten or twenty degrees below zero, seems, at first sight, to be a terrible matter; but it is not really a hardship. In the depths of the forest no wind can penetrate, and when well sheltered, no matter how low the temperature, a man walking or taking any sort of exercise never suffers from cold.

The proper time to build a camp is in summer or autumn. The bark then peels off the white birch and white spruce trees in large sheets, 4 ft. or 5 ft. square, and with it a roof can be constructed in a very short time capable of resisting any weather. In winter, when the sap is frozen, it is hard to get this bark, and it is necessary to adopt the more tedious operation of splitting cedar into boards.

Once when I had returned with a friend to a camping-ground carefully prepared during the summer for us by a backwoodsman, we found the place had been burnt down. We had been walking all day on snow-shoes, and had pictured

to ourselves the comforts of a warm fire and shelter. The surprise we felt upon finding our home covered with 4 ft. of snow was beyond description. My friend's face was a picture of misery. He had been looking forward to a snug log-hut, and the romance of a lodging in the wilderness. However, we worked hard to put matters right, and after supper we became quite jolly.

The first step towards making a winter camp is to shovel out the snow from a space of about 20 ft. square ; using the snow-shoes as shovels. On two opposite sides of the square space of ground thus cleared of snow, walls 2 or 3 feet in height are made of logs, and slanting poles over these are stuck in the snow to support the roof. The fire is made in the centre, and on each side of it a thick coating of young fir-boughs is laid down for seats and beds. But the great institution is the fire : when it burns brightly, the camp is warm and comfortable ; when it gets low, the cold penetrates through everything. Dry spruce and pine are recommended for kindling, but the great mainstay is green hardwood. Rock or bird's-eye maple is the best, beech and black birch rank

next. Great logs, 8 or 9 feet in length and 1 foot in diameter, redden and glow in the camp-fire, which consumes fuel enough in one night to keep an ordinary fireplace going for a month. The kettle, suspended at the end of a pole, is soon boiling, ready for tea ; the frying-pan sends forth an odour pleasing to the hungry, and he eats his supper of pork, tea, and bread in the woods with more appetite than civilisation has ever given him at home.

In conclusion, I will add a few remarks concerning the Indian character as a hint to fishermen or hunters when employing them.

The Indian has the mind of a child in the body of an adult. The struggle for existence weeds out the weak and the sickly, the slow and the stupid, and creates a race physically perfect, and mentally fit to cope with the conditions they are forced to meet so long as they are left to themselves.

Those who have no knowledge of Indians imagine them to be merely ignorant people, like uneducated individuals of the white race. This is not the case. The Indian is not like the white man of any class or condition. The Indian boy who associates constantly with his own race, sets

up for his standard the wisdom and learning of the old and wise men of his tribe who obtained their position of precedence in the old days of war and hunting. His ideas thus take tone from the old people whom he is taught should be his examples. He will think as they think, and employ the same reasoning processes that they do. There will be some slight advance in thought now, but the advance will be slow. Indians are close observers, and draw conclusions that are just and surprising. Before being contaminated by civilisation they are truthful and honest. When they killed food, they did so not merely to supply their own wants, but to share it with their tribe. Another characteristic of the Indian is his fidelity to friends. In case of need he will give his life for a true friend.

The common belief that Indians are stolid or sullen is altogether erroneous. They are really a merry, good-natured, and jocular people. As a race they are warriors.

Mr. George Bird Grinnell, an excellent authority on "The North American Indians of to-day," tells a story he recently heard of a Cheyenne warrior. The Indian spoke as follows :—

"It was long ago, when I was still unmarried,

that I had had for a long time a sore knee, badly swollen and painful. It had hurt and troubled me for more than two years, and I thought that it would kill me. I said to my father : 'Now pretty soon I am going to die. When I die, do not put me in the ground and cover me with earth. I want you to put me in a lodge on a bed and leave me there.'

"My father said : 'My son, you must not die in that way. That will not be good. Instead, I will fit you out properly, and you shall go to war, and give your body to the enemy. Ride right in and count the first *coup*, and let them kill you. Then you will die bravely and well.'

"Not long after this a war-party was gotten up by Big Foot to go against the Omahas, and I joined it. My father gave me his best horse ; it was the fastest one in the party. I was finely dressed and nicely painted, and my hair was combed and smoothly braided, so that I might look well and die bravely.

"When we got down toward the country of the Omahas, our scout one day returned very soon, and told us that he had found the enemy close by. Just beyond a near-by hill.

"All our party started for the Omahas, but when we came in sight of the place where they had been we could see no one. As we sat there considering, one of the party looked off down a little creek, and saw two men. We charged them. The two Omahas jumped on their horses and ran. I had the fastest horse of all the Cheyennes, and was ahead of all the rest. I was intending to do as my father had told me. As I rode, I saw that one of the Omahas had a flint-lock gun, and the other a bow and arrows, and as I was coming up with them, I saw the one who had the gun raise the pan-cover and pour in some powder to make a sure fire. Then he began to sing, and made signs to me to come on. I had no gun, only a bow and arrows and a quirt.

"The two Omahas rode side by side and pretty close together, and I thought that I would ride in between them, count *coup* on the one that had the gun, and give them both a chance to kill me. I did not wish to live. I raised the whip to hit the one that had the gun. Just as I was about to do this the Omaha twisted around on his horse, and thrust the muzzle of the gun so close to me that it touched my war shirt. The gun

snapped and did not go off; and as it snapped I brought my whip-handle down on his head and almost knocked him off his horse. The other man shot his bow over his right shoulder, and the arrow went close to my ear. Then I rode on by them, and the rest of the party came up and killed them both."

The conditions of old times do not exist in Canada to-day, though as recently as August 14, 1903, the following appeared in a New York paper: "Fight with Indians.—According to Mexican advices, the bloodiest battle of the present Maya Indian rebellion has occurred in the State of Yucatan. The Indians surrounded a detachment of troops, and killed and wounded sixty of them. Many of the Mayas were also killed. It is thought the Indians obtained their guns and ammunition from traders in British Honduras."

The Indian guide is a harmless, inoffensive person, most anxious to please and serve you, but, as I have already pointed out, quite different from other men. He should be treated with kindness and respect, and then his services will become acts of friendship rather than menial labours. The idea of menial life is hateful to a guide who is worth having. He is literally the

son of the soil, and his knowledge of his fallen greatness still lurks within. He honours a good shot and sportsman ; indeed, there is no surer way to his heart than inspiration from a courageous, fearless hunter.



"THE VIRGINIAN DEER'S FAVOURITE SPOT."

[See p. 61.]

III

THE VIRGINIAN DEER

Cervus virginianus

PERHAPS no species of wild animal inhabiting Muskoka deserves to be regarded with more interest than the subject of our present chapter, the common or Virginian deer; its symmetrical form, graceful bound, and rushing speed, when flying before the hounds, excites the admiration of every one, though he be ever so dull an observer.

The skin is of the greatest service to the wild man, and also useful to the dweller in towns; dressed and smoked by the squaw until soft and pliable it will not shrink with all the wetting to which it is exposed. While crossing Lake Muskoka during the spring of 1889 my canoe struck against a floating log and rapidly commenced to fill. It was night—the shores and islands were invisible—soon I found myself

swimming for my life. The general tendency is to swim in circles, but some strange luck brought me safely to an island after being in the water about an hour. Covering the hot sand over my damp clothing I soon fell asleep. My deerskin moccasins were as soft and pliable next day as though they had been soaked in oil.

The skin of the Virginian deer makes an excellent hunting shirt and leggings, and it is the material part of the dress of many Indian tribes. Although the animal scarcely ever occupies the same bed on successive nights, yet it is usually found in the same range, or drive, as it is called, and often not fifty yards from the place where it was startled before. It is fond of lingering round fences and old fields that are partially overspread with brushwood, briar patches, and other cover to screen it from observation. Occasionally it lies immersed in water, the nose and antlers alone being visible. Does and bucks are fattest from November to January. The young are produced in the month of April. The doe conceals her young under a prostrate tree-top or in a thick covert of grass, visiting them occasionally during the day, especially in the morning, evening, and at night.

The young fawns when only a few days old are often found in so sound a sleep that on several occasions they have been taken up in the arms before they became conscious that they were captives. On one occasion I discovered a young fawn sleeping under some bushy boughs. Alighting from my horse, I lifted the pretty creature in my arms and quickly mounted. Scarcely had I done so before I heard the sound of some heavy animal following in my tracks. It was a large doe, and as she approached nearer I observed her movements were fearless and extraordinary. Proceeding at a rapid pace, she lifted high her front legs, performing a curious striking action in the air. Soon I discovered her object—she was the mother in pursuit of her young. Wishing to test her fidelity, I urged my Indian pony to a gallop, but I had not covered more than half a mile when I became aware that the pursuer was close at hand and meant mischief. The idea of danger from a deer appeared absurd, so I seized my revolver and drew in rein. Pointing at the deer's breast I fired. The bullet missed, and I escaped by a miracle receiving a blow that would have maimed me for life. The sharp hoof struck my saddle and cut it as cleanly as a knife. This

was enough, so I threw my burden upon the ground. The mother, however, was not satisfied, but pursued me for a considerable distance before she returned to her offspring.

The Virginian deer when taken young easily becomes domesticated, and will attach itself to its keeper in a few hours. Some have been reared successfully by a she goat or cow. They breed in confinement but become troublesome pets—they have been known to bite the heads off chickens and ducks, devour harness, and jump through windows into the house. One to four fawns are the number of the young. At Goose Creek, Mr. Audubon killed a doe with four fawns. The deer when wounded will bleat loudly like a calf, and the buck emits at night a shrill whistling sound. This deer cannot exist without water, and is obliged to visit some stream or spring every night. It is nocturnal in its habits; when first startled, without being much alarmed, it gives two or three springs, alighting with apparent awkwardness on three feet, and immediately afterwards resting on the opposite side, erecting its white tail and throwing it from side to side. A few high bounds succeed, whilst the head is turned

in every direction to enable the animal to detect the cause of alarm. The leaps and high boundings of this deer are so graceful that they cannot be witnessed without admiration. In riding through woods at night I have often heard them stamp their feet, the bucks on such occasions giving a loud snort, then bounding off for a few yards, and again repeating the stamping and snorting, which appear to be nocturnal habits. Deer have been known to plunge into the surf, and swim out to sea for a mile or two when heavily pressed.

The tender, juicy, savoury, and, above all, digestible qualities of the flesh of the Virginian deer are well known ; and the venison is held in highest esteem from the camp of the backwoodsman to the luxurious tables of the opulent, and, when not kept too long, a fat haunch with jelly is almost as much relished as a "hunter's steak" cooked in the open air on a frosty evening far away in the dark recesses of the forest. The weight of this deer has rarely exceeded 200 lbs.

Tremendous battles ensue when the buck is in full run in search of the does. On meeting with other males, the weaker animal has been

known to be gored to death ; generally, however, he flies from the vanquisher, or follows him, crestfallen, at a respectful distance, ready to turn on his heels and scamper off at the first threat of his victorious rival. In these *rencontres* the horns of the combatants sometimes become interlocked in such a manner that they cannot be separated, and the pugnacious bucks are consigned to a lingering death by starvation.

The following is an extract from my notes :—

“Crane Lake, Muskoka, September 7th, 1902. Leaving Blackstone Lake we took a path through the bush. After walking about a mile we arrived at Crane Lake. The only event during our journey which produced excitement occurred while we were cautiously crossing a swamp on the half-decayed, slippery logs. Mac was carrying a number of articles, but stepping out in splendid form as though he had been born to bush-life. His object appeared to impress the party that an athlete was equally at home in all the departments of courage and endurance. He was walking some distance ahead of the party when suddenly he disappeared. We heard, however, he was much alive ; in fact, he made his existence conspicuous for miles around

by his emphatic and uncompromising condemnation of the log he had slipped off. We were all inclined to smile when he showed his face covered with black mud, giving him the appearance of a nigger, but when he groaned out that the whisky flask had fallen out of his fur-coat the whole party made a rush for the mud and dirty water.

“When we arrived at Crane Lake we found four boats in readiness to convey us with the Indians and hounds to the happy hunting-ground. The picture presented by these hardy men clothed in their rough shirts, gaiters, and boots, with rifles and camping-kit, will not easily be forgotten. The sun was shining brightly, and on either side, so far as the eye could reach, stretched the bright green tops of the forest growth, extending to unexplored regions of dense woods, still the natural possession of bears, wolves, racoons, lynx, etc., and innumerable deer. The lake water was sparkling and clear, and the little islands with their luxuriant vegetation and romantic rocks and bays gave a perfect tone to a beautiful scene. Crane Lake and Deer Lake are still uninhabited by settlers. No rough shanties or blackened clearings deface their

loveliness. Here is an ideal camping-ground, and one can picture the pioneer cutting out for himself a rude home and living. The mind tries to imagine the conditions during the cold bright days of winter—the snow-clad earth and ice-bound water. A sportsman of some refinement and artistic taste can hardly resist the temptation to put in his claim for the 140 acres and dwell here for ever. We must remember, however, in our enthusiasm that lovely scenery requires the observer to be fortified with materials necessary for existence. The impression conveyed to my mind was associated with personal comforts, *viz.*, modern clothing, modern guns, provisions, etc., guides and servants, and a college friend—food for the body, and food for the mind; but where everything must be done by one's own efforts, trees cut down, a house built, wood chopped, fires lit, food produced and cooked, etc., common sense disabuses the mind.

“The direction taken by the boats was the same as that I had previously followed in company with Mr. Kendall, and recalled to mind many a sturdy pull and frantic scare from a bush-fire.

“We landed at the same bay that I have

attempted to describe in the first chapter. Here the party separated, two men having previously been landed some miles higher up the lake. Being somewhat limited in our supply of rifles, I had selected a shot-gun, with a view to pursuing ruffled grouse, if any appeared during my long wait.

“My position was close to the lake. It was a fairly open spot where tall trees had long ago rotted and fallen. This swamp covered about ten acres, and on the north side the ground rose to a considerable height. The place was bounded by a few tall, handsome trees, and it was behind one of these on the south side that I took my stand about thirty-five yards from the thick bush.

“My companions soon disappeared and I was left alone in perhaps one of the wildest and most solitary regions in the world. For ten minutes a deathly silence reigned, and my thoughts dwelt upon my line of action in the event of a deer crossing the swamp. My duty was to drive him back to the guns and prevent him taking to the lake. The first awakening to life was the squall of some blue-jays evidently startled by the hunting-party, and I had opportunities of observing their habits closely from my hiding-place. They

approached so near to me that I could have hit them with a stone, and then, as though disgusted, they all flew off chattering. Then a large handsome kingfisher about the size of a pigeon, crossed and recrossed the swamp, giving me an easy shot and a desire to add his gorgeous plumage to my collection of birds. The presence of this bird appeared to create some stir and animation in the dark waters of the swamp. Innumerable little heads popped up, and now and then a heavy splash startled me. Suddenly there arose a hideous bellowing, started by a deep guttural voice and chorused by thousands, until I realised the fact that a deer might pass me during the din. They were huge bull-frogs, but what the bird had done to cause their wrath or alarm I could not conceive, until it occurred to me that they had only just recovered from the noise of our party. Bull-frogs are considered excellent eating. Both Mac and I pretended we liked frogs' legs, both even deceived each other by boasting we had often eaten them, both became most enthusiastic over the cooking, but drew a sigh of relief when we perceived the skinning and killing process had already been attended to. Then came the new odour of frying. Mac

smacked his lips and whispered in my ear : 'I wish they had come sooner, old man! I could eat the lot myself'—but oh! with what a sickly smile he spoke, and when he looked at me he perceived a sicklier face. Then he frowned and looked as though he would say : 'I question if he has ever eaten a frog's leg in his life.' Complaining that the smoke got into his throat, and with a cheery request to the Americans that he did not care how soon the frogs were cooked, he sat down by my side in silence. Suddenly he turned to me and whispered : 'Do you like frog's legs, Poddy?' 'Yes,' I replied, feeling very uncomfortable as a sort of fishy, fowly odour entered my nostrils. 'You don't seem very keen,' he added. After this we fell into silence, to be aroused by a jolly American bearing in triumph toward us a crowded pan of the nauseous-looking fry. How I wished inwardly he would fall and sprain his ankle, and I thought I heard a remark from Mac not too complimentary ; but it may have been only fancy, as the leaves were rustling in the trees overhead. Mac was helped first, and for this I was devoutly thankful. I made an excuse that my plate was dirty, thus causing delay while I washed it in the lake, but I

found Mac waiting for me patiently upon my return with his piled-up plate untouched. Probably he would have sat for an hour had not a voice whispered : ' How do you like them ? ' He replied with the question : ' Have you tasted them yet ? ' I told him I was waiting to hear whether they were properly cooked. Seizing a small leg he commenced to eat, murmuring : ' Most delicate ! most delicious ! ' and suggesting again and again how valuable they would prove for invalids. He, however, did not ask for more, and soon disappeared *hors de combat*. We don't eat frog's legs now, nor refer to the subject.

" Scarcely had the frogs disappeared when I heard the approach of the hounds, their deep baying sounded almost sepulchral from the virgin forest.

" Immediately I became alert, examining gun, cartridges, safety-catch, etc., and then listening intently. I gazed on all the deer-runs without making the slightest movement with my body. Once or twice I caught the sound of snapping twigs, but after waiting anxiously for half an hour I concluded that the stag had ' broken away.' Another monotonous silence followed, and I had a temptation to fire at a woodcock that sat upon a bough close by uttering his

strange rattling notes. After a while I could not resist the temptation to leave my post and approach him. I had walked only ten yards, when I was aroused by a deep baying, and before I could regain my tree there came a whirr and report as a bullet went whizzing through the air. Some sportsmen who have had no big-game experience completely lose their heads when confronted by a wild stag. They are unable to shoot or move. This is called the 'deer scare.' I had formerly experienced this feeling ten years before, and had no longer a tendency to it. My plan was to remain concealed, and then rush forward and discharge both barrels into the breast or neck. I had not long to wait—a brief notice of snapping twigs, and then a huge stag appeared with his head almost touching the ground, and his handsome antlers directed toward me. In a second I fired, and the stag took a bound into the air, but before I could reach him he sprang to his feet and bounded off towards the north. I shot again, but as I did so either his wound or the slippery condition of the log caused him to stumble upon his knees. I aimed between the shoulders, and his tail taking the line of sight was cut off as cleanly as though it

had been severed with a knife. This incident is unique in my knowledge of deer-shooting experience. The tail is still in my possession. I found eventually that all my shots took effect and the animal bled inwardly. My attention was soon directed again to my post, as the noise of a heavy animal approaching drew near."

The white man conducts his hunting excursions in various modes suited to his taste and adapted to the nature of the country in which he resides. My favourite method used to be "deer-stalking." This is carried out on foot, without dogs or companions. Experience soon teaches us where to look for deer. He may be espied in his bed, or silently crept upon from behind the cover of a large tree whilst he is feeding. The prints upon the snow or path are sure indications to guide the sportsman. When studied closely a reliable estimate may be formed as to the time and pace that the deer has crossed the path. It would be impossible to write directions to would-be big-game hunters, natural instinct becomes our only teacher, and living in Muskoka's pure atmosphere the senses of sight and sound wonderfully improve. A knowledge of the movements of a deer when alarmed, when at ease,

or when satisfied his pursuer has departed, are essential to successful deer-stalking.

I cannot conclude these articles without reference to a "Supposed Hybrid Horse-Deer." The following is a copy of my letter to *The Field* :—

"Having read with interest Mr. Tegetmeier's note on the zebra-hybrid, I send you a description of the above curious animal which appeared in *The Zoologist* during the year 1860, and perhaps some one may be able to inform me whether the stuffed specimen is still in existence, and other particulars relating to its history.

"'Hybrid Horse-Deer,' December 9th, 1848. This remarkable filly (seven months old) was found a short time since in the New Forest, and is evidently of a mixed breed between the horse and the deer. Her mother, a pony-mare, was observed to associate with some red stags in the New Forest for some months, and at last this foal was seen by her side. The nose shows a proximity both to the stag and the horse ; her forehead is round like that of a deer, legs slender and distinct, hoofs pointed and partly double ; colour, brown, lighter under the belly, and tail like a deer. This extraordinary animal is the property of T. G. Attwater, Esq., at Attwater,

at the village of Bodenham, three miles from Salisbury. Dr. Fowler of that city has inspected the hybrid, and is quite satisfied of the correctness of the preceding statement, and Colonel Buckley, a keeper of the New Forest, has likewise seen the animal and is of the same opinion.

“P. ST. M. PODMORE.”

Mr. Tegetmeier replied in *The Field* as follows :—

“The existence of such a hybrid as that described is unknown to zoologists, and from the extreme diversity of structure would be regarded as impossible by all comparative anatomists. Malformed animals of various species are always regarded by the uninformed general public as hybrids ; no absurdity is too great for the credulity of a large proportion of those persons who delight in the wonderful. The existence and origin of the pig-faced lady has not passed out of the memory of all persons. The preservation of the specimen would be of slight importance, but the examination of the anatomical structure would at once have settled the question. The supposed hybrid was doubtless a malformed pony, and no trace of the structure of a ruminating animal.”

This letter from Mr. Tegetmeier was followed some time afterwards by another from "Impecuniosus."

"SIR,—I saw this creature many years ago, I think in 1856, anyhow before I was in the army, and, having made a sketch of it at the time, remember its appearance perfectly. What this was may interest some of your readers. It was exhibited with 'the giant horse,' a great half-bred beast supposed to be twenty hands high, and which had little interest for me. At the time my opinion was, and I have never changed it, that the 'hybrid' was no more nor less than a very small mule judiciously 'faked up.' It was some eleven hands high, or perhaps less; colour, the brown of a brown mule, which also resembles that of a deer in its winter coat; head small, but asinine; ears about the length of a deer's, as is the case with those of many mules; very little mane (this may have been nature or art); the tail much what a mule's would be if denuded of the long hairs, but I and my pal, in our united wisdom, suspected it of having been docked; body and legs distinctly those of a mule, also the feet, but down the front of each

hoof there was a sort of furrow, which also struck us as being a work of art, not nature ; the furrow did not penetrate the horn like a sand-crack.

"The showman must have been tired of his beast, for he tried to sell her (it was a female) to me for £25, and said that he could warrant her quiet in harness. I will not be certain, but think the man called her six years old. Supposing this to be so, and the year 1856 the time when I saw her (I know it was in the transition period between Harrow and the army), I much doubt there being any red deer in the New Forest to be her parent. Mr. Grantley Berkley's book, published in 1852, describes the practical extermination of the fallow deer, and mentions a doubtful tradition concerning the existence of one red hind about 1850."

The original interest I took in this subject was during my undergraduate days, when I had access to the University Library during the morning. I have since been satisfied to ignore the subject, after reading the above testimony, though it is my opinion that zoologists too often neglect the important subject of hybridisation, and know very little about it.



"I HURLED THE USELESS WEAPON AT THE BEAR'S HEAD."

[See p. 93.]

IV

THE BLACK BEAR OF MUSKOKA

Ursus americanus

THE black bear of Muskoka is perhaps the most harmless, timid, and inoffensive creature to be found in the Canadian forest. An animal possessed with great strength and powers of endurance, roaming at large and appropriating indiscriminately whatever food comes to hand, is always associated from prejudice with many acts of ferocity.

Canada can boast of several forms of bear, but there is no possibility of the dangerous kinds being met with in Muskoka. The dreaded grizzly (*Ursus horribilis*) confines himself to the rocks and caverns of the west. The cinnamon bear roams in the fur-countries, west and north of the Missouri, extending to the barren grounds of the north-west, and the white or polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*) inhabits the north of Baffin's and Hudson's Bays.

Some hunters whom I have met have affirmed that Muskoka produces two kinds of bear, viz., the long-legged and the short-legged, but this is not the case, there is only one, the *Ursus americanus*. Black bears differ very much. I have examined some after death and found them round, plump, and short-limbed ; others gaunt, leggy, and scraggy. This depends on age and condition. They retire to their dens in November and come out in April. The females generally produce two cubs, sometimes three, but I have never seen them accompanied by more than two, and more frequently one.

The following is an extract from my notes :—

“The first time I had an opportunity of seeing a she bear with her cubs was in 1888. I had only just arrived in Canada when I received an invitation to join a hunting-party camped at Trout Lake, some miles from Pembroke, down the Ottawa River. Leaving the small steamer after a somewhat exciting trip, I was met at a log wharf by a young Englishman dressed in a rough shirt, deerskin leggings, etc., and wearing a wide-brimmed slouch hat. The road was merely a blaze-path, and during our walk I was more than once asked to remain alone while he

followed mysterious tracks. Sometimes he calmly informed me that a large bear had gone ahead of us only a minute since, or he would hold up his hand for silence as the whirr of wings or a strange drumming broke the stillness of the forest. On more than one occasion during his absence I heard unpleasant noises of snapping twigs and deep-drawn breath, and when in my excitement I raised my rifle to aim blindly into the bush, the branches would part aside and my rough companion appear, rarely empty-handed. His amusement at my apparent terror of meeting a bear made me feel ashamed, and soon he worked me up to such a state that before we arrived at the lake, I believe, had a bear appeared, I should have pursued him with a stick. I could not help feeling what a coward and inferior man I was to this fearless, half-civilised young hunter. Never shall I forget my surprise when we arrived at Trout Lake. My guide had previously pressed my arm and pointed with his finger to the silvery water. We both approached cautiously. The sun was shining brightly and lighting up every creek and bay of this romantic spot. Some distance up the lake a loon swam about uttering at intervals a quivering cry, and along the reed

beds were visible a half-grown brood of wild ducks ; but what riveted my attention and caused my hand to tremble was the sight of a she bear with her two cubs, within a stone's throw of where we stood, about to cross the creek. One cub appeared much larger than the other, and walked independently behind his mother, whilst the younger perched himself comfortably on all fours upon the old bear's back.

“ The shores of Trout Lake were infested with bears, and I don't think I have ever seen so many in one place as I did there. On one occasion three bears swam across the Ottawa river in broad daylight, and rushed through the streets of Pembroke. One was killed in the burial-ground, another fell dead in the street, pierced by twenty bullets, while the third escaped toward the township of Alice and got clear away. I was at Pembroke at the time, and can recall the screams of women and children, the rifle and pistol reports, the shouts and confusion. Several persons were nearly killed by bullets as the bewildered bears fled.

“ The young of the black bear are exceedingly small at their birth, sometimes not much larger than kittens. They are almost invariably brought forth

in some well-concealed den, or great hollow tree, and so cautious is the dam in selecting her place of accouchement, that it is extremely difficult to discover it, and consequently very rarely that either the female or her cubs are seen until the latter have attained a much larger size than when born, and are able to follow their mother, and climb trees with facility. Once (it was in 1890) I stumbled upon a deserted bear's den under the following circumstances:—

“It was clear that, whilst taking aim, I had overbalanced myself, and the noise of the report had caused the ponies to take fright and hurl me against a sharp piece of rock. The spot where the accident happened contained many shelving rocks and small hollow places like caverns, where one might expect to find a sleeping bear, living upon the accumulated fat of autumn's feasts. Here appeared a desirable place for a night's rest, with the possibility of a warm skin for a couch.

“It was nearly dark when I returned, and already the wolves had begun to howl in answering calls. It is difficult to describe the savage voice of a hungry wolf. It might be likened to something between the dismal moaning of a watch-dog

on a moonlight night, and the baying of a deerhound running on a strong scent.

“Searching among the arched rocks I discovered a cave, the entrance of which was partially blocked with snow. As this appeared to suit my purpose, I worked hard to clear away an opening to admit my body. This cave was situated about twenty yards from the blaze-path, and therefore in a good position to spy upon a dangerous neighbour. A backwoodsman is accustomed to roughing it, and even when housed by a friend, regards a place reserved for his use near the stove as ample hospitality. He is only too glad to wrap himself up in furs, and sleep, without the necessary watch-fire and anxious awakenings. It was too dark thoroughly to explore this subterranean place, though I observed, as I entered, that the rocks above sloped downward from a considerable height, and formed a roof so lofty that I could not touch it with my hands outstretched above my head. There was a large heap of dry leaves upon the floor, and these I shovelled together to form a soft couch, and it was not long before I fell asleep. How strangely different was my bedchamber from that of the previous night ! Neither could have been styled

luxurious, and yet, in comparison, the hard bunk of my hut was an indulgence. Next morning I discovered I had slept in a bear's den."

The black bear is a remarkably swift runner when first alarmed, and is never treed unless pursued by good dogs and hunters on horseback.

Few dogs will venture to tackle a bear, though they will pursue him and hamper his flight by snapping at his legs as he runs away. The hound crossed with the bulldog is perhaps the best breed for bear-hunting. Four or five of these dogs have been known to attack and overpower a medium-sized cub. The Indians have a special breed whose origin is uncertain, and I have also seen wolf-hybrids about their wigwams. Young wolf-cubs make very pretty and amusing pets, and when associated from an early age with the domestic dog they will interbreed. The offspring is like its reclaimed parent, very unreliable and treacherous. One day it will be gentle and fawning with a child ; the next day it will snarl and snap at every one who happens to approach the kennels. These brutes, however, will attack a bear without hesitation, and fight with the courage and madness of a tiger.

Shooting bears out of a canoe requires some

practice on the part of the shooter and considerable skill on that of the canoe-men. Bruin does not mind a canoe in the least, so long as the wind is in the right direction and he can see no sudden movement of the paddles. Wary in the extreme about any unusual appearance or sound on the land side, he never expects dangers waterward. He looks back over his shoulder along the beach, peers into the bush, and now and then stops for a good sniff to windward, but he is so accustomed to see floating logs, that he never looks out for an enemy in that direction, and takes no notice of a skilfully handled canoe. Crouching down with nothing visible he can be approached within thirty yards.

The black bear is very tenacious of life, and, like his relative, the grizzly bear, is dangerous when irritated or wounded. The story of a bear wilfully attacking a man is so contradictory to my own experiences of travelling alone through the forests that I can scarcely believe it, though Mr. Gregory, of Lake Rosseau (a very old friend), informed me that his children were followed one night by an angry bear while inoffensively walking from Port Carling to Port Sanfield. This happened, I understood, two years ago. Audubon

and Bachman quote another case which appeared in an American paper :—

“A young man, whilst at work in a field, accompanied by a small boy, was attacked by a bear which suddenly appeared on the edge of the forest, and quite unexpectedly fell upon him with fury. Almost at the first onset the brute overthrew the farmer, who fell to the ground on his back, with the bear clutching him, and biting his arm severely. He was unarmed with the exception of a knife, which he could not get out of his pocket owing to the position in which he had fallen. Perceiving that his chance of escape was desperate, he rammed his hand and arm so far down the bear's throat as to produce the effect of partial strangulation, and whilst the bear became faint from loss of breath he got possession of his knife and cut the brute's throat, and with the exception of a few severe bites, and some lacerations from the claws of the animal, was not very much injured.”

I have met bears on a narrow path at close quarters, and always found them in a greater hurry to get away from me than I was from them. On one occasion I was scrambling over some rough country, and had just rounded a large

boulder when I discovered a huge black bear on the other side. For a moment we both stopped, and then began a race for life, only we ran in opposite directions, the bear covering two yards to my one. On another occasion I was walking along a bush-path when I perceived a bear and cub approaching me. Stepping quickly aside she passed on, merely giving me an indifferent look of recognition.

Mr. Long, whose book I read to-day (December 18th, 1903), describes a meeting he had with a bear, that in many respects recalls several experiences of my own, and harmonises with what I have just written on the subject. I will repeat this extraordinary adventure in his own words, but I rather doubt the bear's conduct could have represented that of *Ursus americanus* though President Roosevelt is of an opinion that the habits of animals of the same species may differ under changed conditions of climate and country.

"Just below me a boulder lifted its head and shoulders out of the swirling current. With the canoe line I might easily let myself down to that rock and make sure of my next fish. Getting back would be harder; but salmon

are worth some trouble ; so I left my rod and started back to camp. It was late afternoon, and I was hurrying along the path, giving chief heed to my feet in the ticklish walking, with the cliff above and the river below, when a loud 'Hoowuff!' brought me up with a shock. There at a turn in the path, not ten yards ahead, stood a huge bear, calling unmistakably, 'Halt,' and blocking me in as completely as if the mountain had toppled over before me.

"There was no time to think ; the shock and scare were too great. I just gasped 'Hoo-wuff!' instinctively as the bear had shot it out of his deep lungs a moment before, and stood stock-still, as he was doing. He was startled as well as I, that was the only thing I was sure about.

"I suppose that in each of our heads at first there was just one thought: 'I'm in a fix ; how shall I get out?' And in his training or mine there was absolutely nothing to suggest an immediate answer. He was anxious, evidently, to go on. Something, a mate perhaps, must be calling him up river ; else he would have whirled and vanished at the first alarm. But how far might he presume on the big animal's

timidity, who stood before him blocking the way, and whom he had stopped with his 'Hoo-wuff!' before he should get too near? That was his question, plainly enough.

"There was no snarl or growl, no savageness in his expression; only intense wonder and questioning in the look which fastened upon my face and seemed to bore its way through, to find out just what I was thinking.

"I met his eyes squarely with mine, and held them, which was, perhaps, the most sensible thing I could have done, though it was all unconscious on my part. In the brief moment that followed I did a lot of thinking.

"There was no escape, up or down; I must go on or turn back. If I jumped forward with a yell, as I had done before under different circumstances, would he not rush at me savagely, as all wild creatures do when cornered? No, the time for that had passed with the first instant of our meeting. The bluff would now be too apparent; it must be done without hesitation, or not at all. If I turned back, he would follow me to the end of the ledge, growing bolder as he came on; and beyond that it was dangerous walking, where he had all

the advantage, and all the knowledge of his ground. Besides, it was late, and I wanted a salmon for my supper.

"I have wondered since how much of this hesitation he understood ; and how he came to the conclusion, which he certainly reached, that I meant him no harm, but only wanted to get on, and was not disposed to give him the path. All the while I looked at him steadily, until his eyes began to lose their intentness. My hand slipped back and gripped the handle of my hunting-knife. Some slight confusion came with the motion, though I would certainly have gone over the cliff and taken my chances in the current, rather than have closed with him, with all his enormous strength, in that narrow place. Suddenly his eyes wavered from mine ; he swung his head to look down and up ; and I knew that I had won the first move—and the path also, if I could keep my nerve. I advanced a step or two very quietly, still looking at him steadily. There was a suggestion of white teeth under his wrinkled chops ; but he turned his head to look back over the way he had come, and presently he disappeared. It was only for a moment ; then his nose and eyes were poked cautiously

by the corner of the rock. He was peeping to see if I were still there. When the nose vanished again I stole forward to the turn and found him just ahead, looking down the cliff to see if there were any other way below.

“He was uneasy now ; a low, whining growl came floating up the path, and for the first time some suggestion of the humour of the situation gave me a bit of consolation. I began to talk to him, not humorously, but as if he were a Scotchman and open only to argument. ‘You’re in a fix, Mooween, a terrible fix,’ I kept saying to him softly, ‘but if you had only stayed at home till twilight, as a bear ought to do, we should be happy now both of us. You have put me in a fix, too, you see ; and now you’ve just got to get me out of it. I’m not going back. I don’t know the path as well as you do. Besides, it will be dark soon, and I should probably break my neck.’

“I have noticed that all wild animals grow uneasy at the sound of the human voice, speaking however quietly. There is in it something deep, unknown, mysterious beyond all their powers of comprehension ; and they go away from it quickly when they can. I have a theory also that all animals, wild and domestic, understand

more of our mental attitude than we give them credit for; and the theory gains rather than loses strength whenever I think of Mooween on that narrow pass. I can see him now, turning, twisting uneasily, and the half-timid look in his eyes as they met mine furtively, as if ashamed, and again the low, troubled whine comes floating up the path and mingles with the rush and murmur of the salmon pool below.

“A bear hates to be outdone quite as much as does a fox. If you catch him in a trap, he never growls nor fights nor resists, as lynx and otter, and almost all other wild creatures do. He has outwitted you and shown his superiority so often that he is utterly overwhelmed and crushed when you find him, at last, helpless and outdone. He seems to forget all his great strength and his frightful power of teeth and claws. He just lays his head down between his paws, turns his eyes aside, and refuses to look at you or let you see how ashamed he is. That is what you are chiefly conscious of, nine times out of ten, when you find a bear or a fox held fast in your trap, and something of that was certainly in Mooween's look and actions now, as I sat there in his path and enjoyed his confusion.

“Near him a spruce-tree sprang out of the rocks and reached upward to a ledge far above. Slowly he raised himself against this, but turned to look at me again, sitting quietly in his own path—that he could no longer consider his—and smiling at his discomfiture as I remember how ashamed he is to be outdone. Then an electric shock seemed to hoist him out of the trial. He shot up the tree in a succession of nervous, jerky jumps, rising with astonishing speed for so huge a creature, smashing the little branches, ripping the rough bark with his great claws, sending down a clattering shower of chips and dust behind him, till he reached the level of the ledge above and sprang out upon it ; where he stopped and looked down to see what I would do next. And there he stayed, his great head hanging over the edge of the rock, looking at me intently till I rose and went quietly down the trail.

“It was morning when I came back to the salmon-pool. Unlike the mossy forest floor, the hard rock bore no signs to tell me—what I was most curious to know—whether he came down the tree or found some other way over the mountain.”

Another bear adventure related by Mr. Long in

his *School of the Woods*, was undoubtedly *Ursus americanus*. The circumstances, however, were so extraordinary that perhaps I may be excused repeating them.

"Close beside me was a fallen log ; on my right hand was another ; and the two had fallen so as to make the sides of a great angle, their tops resting together against the hill. Between the two were several huge trees growing among the rocks and under-brush. I climbed upon one of these fallen trees and moved along it cautiously, some eight or ten feet above the ground, looking down searchingly for a stray brown feather to guide me to my lost partridge.

"Suddenly the log under my feet began to rock gently. I stopped in astonishment, looking for the cause of the strange shaking ; but there was nothing on the log beside myself. After a moment I went on again, looking again for my partridge. Again the log rocked, heavily this time, almost throwing me off. Then I noticed the tip of the other log, which lay balanced across a great rock, was under the tip of my log and was being prised up by something on the other end. Some animal was there, and it flashed upon me suddenly that he was heavy enough to lift

my weight with his stout lever. I stole along so as to look behind a great tree—and there on the other log, not twenty feet away, a big bear was standing, twisting himself uneasily, trying to decide whether to go on or go back on his unstable footing.

“He discovered me at the instant that my face appeared behind the tree. Such surprise, such wonder I have seldom seen in an animal’s face. For a long moment he met my eyes steadily with his. Then he began to twist about while the logs rocked up and down. Again he looked at the strange animal on the other log; but the face behind the tree had not moved or changed: the eyes looked steadily into his. With a startled movement he plunged off into the underbush, and but for a swift grip on a branch the sudden lurch would have sent me off backwards among the rocks. As he jumped I heard a swift flutter of wings. I followed it timidly, not knowing where the bear was, and in a moment I had the second partridge stowed away comfortably with his brother in my hunting shirt.”

The Indian tribes have many superstitions concerning the bear, and it is with some of them

necessary to go through divers ceremonies before proceeding to hunt the animal. It is believed that the males do not so soon resort to winter quarters as the females, and require some time after the love season to recover their lost fat. The females bring forth their young about the beginning of January. The black bears are somewhat migratory, and in hard winters are found to move southwardly in considerable numbers, although not in company. They couple in September or October. The skin of the black bear is an excellent material for sleigh robes, hammer-cloths, caps, etc., and makes a comfortable bed for the backwoodsman, or Indian; and the grease procured from this animal is used as hair-dressing. Bear's meat is a regular commodity of food in the American and Canadian markets. A well-cured ham is delicious, though I always found the flesh too rich and strong in the form of a steak. Some persons prefer this food to pork, and it is regularly shipped to England to provide for the requirements of such epicures. The skin of a young cub when a quarter grown is a rich glossy black. I once presented an English lady with a handsome skin, and for years she wore it as a cape ;

it was universally admired, and appeared to defy the ravages of time and weather.

Only once have I narrowly escaped death from a wounded bear. I will repeat the incident as I wrote it at the time. Cautiously picking my path and avoiding every dried twig, I worked back to the waterfall, and then along the old timber-road in the direction taken by the Indian. I had not proceeded far when I heard a heavy tread some distance in front of me, and drawing near to Pine Lake. I quickly concealed myself behind a large tree; the sounds drew nearer and nearer; I found my rifle shaking slightly, and this sign of timidity nerved me to action—I said to myself, “My hand may tremble, my bullet fail, but shoot at the bear, I will!” I stepped out from my hiding-place, took a few paces forward, and fired—without taking any particular aim. The bear was hit, and blood trickled from her side. I aimed, and fired again as she lay upon her side. The result was alarming—with an angry growl she came at me as though unwounded. Then an unexpected accident happened; my empty cartridge became jammed at the entrance of the magazine, and I held in my hand a useless

weapon. I had, however, the consolation of knowing that the bear was badly wounded, and that the rest of the party would soon follow the direction of the sound of firing. Hurling the worthless article at the bear's head, I took to my heels and ran. The bear stopped as she came to the rifle, and bit and worried at it with teeth and claws. I did not pause in my flight until I had put at least a mile between us, and then, hearing no sound of pursuit, I sat down upon a log and lit my pipe. I had scarcely sat there five minutes when I heard the heavy tramp of something approaching. Believing it was one of the party, I jumped to my feet and ran forward shouting with laughter, but soon I came to a standstill—as the angry growls of a bear reached my ears. I drew my long hunting-knife and prepared for a fight. When the bear caught sight of me, her growling increased, and standing upon her hind-legs, she tore fiercely at the air, and scratching her wounds she seemed to say, "You did this! You did this!"

One glimpse at this infuriated brute was enough; I felt how powerless I should be in a hand-to-hand fight, so, giving a tremendous

shout, I redoubled my speed. I soon found myself out-distanced, in fact, the bear covered two yards to my one, and in a few seconds would have clutched me in her terrible embrace. A boyish story strangely entered my mind of a wonderful adventure with an infuriated bear, and in an instant I had dragged off my heavy coat and thrown it as far as possible on one side. This experiment succeeded ; the bear, who was half blind with fury and pain, paused to rend it into a thousand pieces. During this interval I gained nearly four hundred yards, and reached a thick belt of hemlocks before I heard her once more upon my path. It seemed only a minute before she reappeared, and as I crouched behind a massive trunk, I faintly hoped she would pass me unobserved. The bear, however, knew exactly my whereabouts, and came directly toward the tree without any hesitation. I was forced, therefore, to quit my shelter speedily, and take refuge behind another tree. By this time it became evident that the movements of the bear were not so brisk, and I noted with hope that she staggered more than once as she hastened in her pursuit. I redoubled my shouts and nerved

myself for one more desperate run. I was, myself, almost in a fainting condition, but the bear was worse—her head lolled on one side, her body swayed to and fro, the angry jaws gasped wider, and the tongue protruded—then there was a gasping growl as she fell on her side and expired. It is always folly to attack bears when you are alone unless you do so from a boat.

In connection with my own narrow escape on this occasion, I may quote here a similar accident which came under President Roosevelt's notice.

"A good hunter whom I once knew, at a time when he was living in Butte, received fatal injuries from a bear he attacked in open woodland. The beast charged after the first shot, but slackened its pace on coming almost up to the man. The latter's gun jammed, and as he was endeavouring to work it, he kept stepping back, facing the bear, which followed a few yards distant, snarling and threatening. Unfortunately, while thus walking backwards the man struck a log and fell over it, whereupon the beast instantly sprang on him and mortally wounded him before help arrived."

To confirm my observations upon *Ursus*

americanus, I will quote from the writings of Stone and Cram in their admirable work on *American Animals*, published during the present year.

“The black bear is a smooth-coated, well-shaped fellow, savage enough when attacked and compelled to fight for its life, or to protect its cubs, but at other times timid and inoffensive. When you walk through the woods the shy rabbit allows you to approach within a few steps before it takes fright and goes bounding away, but the black bear is much more easily frightened. Long before you have got within sight of him he is running for his life with almost the speed of a fox ; yet in his encounters with dogs he has proved himself a dangerous antagonist, plucky and ready to fight. The fact is, his terror of man is the only thing that could possibly save him. If he had assumed the same attitude toward man in America that the brown bear has in Europe, the last of his race would have been shot in the days of our grandfathers.”

The black bear is almost always interested in observing the curious ways of the human kind. Even in the woods he often exhibits a desire to study the habits of men, creeping up under cover

from behind to watch them as they endeavour to catch fish for food, or gather blueberries just as he himself does.

There are more people who have been watched and studied by bears in Muskoka than are aware of it, for the bear is ever careful to keep out of sight, and hurries off the instant he thinks his presence discovered.

In Muskoka, bears have rather increased than diminished in numbers. While we were residing at Port Sanfield last year two bears were to be seen every night prowling about a small clearing within easy rifle-shot from the piazza of the hotel. It was just before the season of duck-shooting, and as there were several good broods in the neighbourhood, we abstained from a chance shot by moonlight. The tracks of game appeared to me more numerous here than they were fourteen years ago.

Mr. J. S. Kingsley, in his *Natural History of Mammals*, writes as follows:—

“It does not deserve to be called ferocious, as under ordinary circumstances it desires to get away from man. Said a bear-hunter to me: ‘Once, when without my gun, I suddenly confronted a big black bear in the Adirondacks.

He stood and looked at me. You must not turn from them at such a time ; that would invite attack : but stand your ground, giving the beast a chance to get away. I stood still, but holloed at him. The bear turned, walked slowly, and once in a while looking behind him. Then he went off at a run.' ”

Those persons who have lived a lifetime in the bush would hardly agree with Mr. Kingsley that “You must not turn from them at such a time ; that would invite attack.” I have always turned from bears when unarmed, and in the majority of cases before I could look round the bear has been out of sight, scrambling and rushing through the bush like a terrified maniac. In case of a narrow path, a bear would naturally hesitate, being in a sense unexpectedly brought to bay.

The curiosity of bears is extraordinary. It is a custom among hunters, when encamped beyond the limits of civilisation, to leave one of the party in camp while the rest explore the forest for game. The duties of cook, housemaid, etc., occupy a considerable time, but the person whose turn it may be to attend to these domestic duties finds the time hang very heavily on his hands.

On the occasion of my first camp on Trout Lake, I had just finished peeling potatoes, and thrown some large slices of pork on the frying-pan, when I chanced to look up, and saw a large black bear watching me from a thick bush about a dozen yards distant. I was horribly scared and rushed into the hut, leaving the cooking to its fate, but when I peeped out again the bear had gone. I had only been in Canada about three weeks, and did not relish an attack from such a massive-looking foe. This bear, or some other bear, returned to the same spot half a dozen times before my companions returned, and the adventure nearly terminated in a tragedy, as I fired upon the leader in the uncertain light of evening, mistaking him for a bear. This mishap turned out a friend in disguise. I was never left alone again to guard the camp.

President Roosevelt, in his admirable book, *Big Game Hunting*, 1899, writes that—

“The black bear is a timid, cowardly animal. One of the standing riddles of American zoology is the fact that the black bear, which is easier killed and less prolific than the wolf, should hold its own in the land better than the latter; this being directly the reverse of what occurs in

Europe, where the brown bear is generally exterminated before the wolf."

The weapons used for bears are rifles, shot-guns, and occasionally revolvers. I would recommend sportsmen to take both guns and dogs with them to Canada. The guns for sale in Canada, and in the States too, are of the cheap Birmingham pattern, that may be seen in the windows of hardware shops. There is such a wide difference of opinion among gunners as to make, bore, and weight of guns, that I should hesitate to recommend any particular pattern. Get your guns from a firm with a reputation. There are about a dozen in England and one in Ireland to choose from. You will have to pay extra for the name, but the article will last a lifetime. The guns of Messrs. Rigby, of Dublin, are as near perfection as possible.

Mr. Roosevelt writes :—

"At one time I possessed a very expensive double-barrelled 500 Express, by one of the crack English makers : but I never liked the gun, and could not do as well with it as with my repeater, which cost barely a sixth as much. So one day I handed it to a Scotch friend, who was manifestly ill at ease with a Winchester exactly

like my own. He took to the double-barrel as naturally as I did to the repeater, and did excellent work with it. Personally, I have always preferred the Winchester. I now use a 45-90 with my old buffalo gun, a 40-90 Sharps', as spare rifle. Both, of course, have specially tested barrels, and are stocked and sighted to suit myself."

England does not afford the same facilities for turning out good shots and experienced sportsmen as America or Canada, hence a few hints on shooting may be useful. Firstly, purchase a gun made by one of the most approved gunsmiths. Practise the handling of it in your own room : be sure that it comes to the shoulder right, and that the eye runs along the barrel with facility. Bring it up to your shoulder ever and anon ; take sight along the barrel and at some small object placed in the farthest corner of the room—a red wafer, or a piece of coloured paper stuck on the wall. By these means a certain degree of ease in handling of the gun will be acquired, and then it will be as well to crack off a few caps by way of accustoming the eye and ear to the explosion, as also familiarising the finger with the touch

of the trigger. Having occupied the leisure moments of a few days in this way, go out into the field and practise shooting small birds on the wing. Get your bird well covered before you pull the trigger, do not dwell on the object after it is once covered. The eye in a correct light is seldom deceived.

Be cool and deliberate, sight the gun a little in advance of your bird, you are apt to fire too low. "To cover a bird" is to look along the barrel-plate so that the eye, the sight, the point, and the bird are all in the same line, and this is the moment to fire. If a bird is flying very swiftly, it is not too much to fire a foot or more before the bird. An old sportsman told me, "The practice of shooting with both eyes open is a mere peculiarity acquired by some ready shots, but does not possess a single advantage over the old style of closing the left eye."

General Wade Hampton, who probably killed more black bears than any other living man in the United States, frequently used the knife, slaying thirty or forty with this weapon. His plan was, when he found that the dogs had the bear at bay, to walk up close and cheer them on. They would instantly seize the

bear in a body, and he would then rush in and stab it behind the shoulder, reaching over so as inflict the wound on the opposite side from that where he stood. He escaped scathless from all these encounters, save one, in which he was rather severely torn in the forearm.

General Hampton always hunted with large packs of hounds, managed sometimes by himself and sometimes by his negro hunters. He occasionally took out forty dogs at a time. He found that all his dogs together could not kill a big fat bear, but they occasionally killed three-year-olds, or lean and poor bears. During the course of his life he has himself killed, or been in at the death of, 500 bears, at least two-thirds of them falling by his own hand. The two largest he himself killed weighed respectively 408 lbs. and 410 lbs. These figures, I understand, were taken down at the time when the animals were actually weighed on the scales. He has stated that "he knew of two instances where hunters were fatally wounded in the chase of the black bear. Both of these men were inexperienced, one being a raftsmen, and the other a man from Vicksburg. He was not able to learn the particulars of the last case,

but the raftsman came too close to a bear that was at bay, and it broke away from the dogs, rushed at and overthrew him, then lying on him, it bit him deeply in the thigh, through the femoral artery, so that he speedily bled to death."

Mr. Roosevelt once saw a man who had been hurt by a black bear. This was an Indian. He had come on the beast close up in a thick wood, and had mortally wounded it with his gun: it had then closed with him, knocking the gun out of his hand, so that he was forced to use his knife. It charged him on all fours, but in the grapple, when it had failed to throw him down, it raised itself on its hind legs, clasping him across the shoulders with its fore-paws. Apparently it had no intention of hugging, but merely sought to draw him within reach of its jaws. He fought desperately against this, using the knife freely, and striving to keep its head back: and the flow of blood weakened the animal, so that it finally fell exhausted, before being able dangerously to injure him. But it had bitten his left arm very severely, and its claws had made long gashes on his shoulders.

Black bears, like grizzlies, vary greatly in their

modes of attack. Sometimes they rush in and bite ; and again they strike with their fore-paws. Personally, I think it depends greatly upon where they are wounded, and the nature of the country.

A keen sportsman and naturalist has graphically described the habits of this animal.

"Once I spent half an hour lying at the edge of a wood and looking at a black bear some three hundred yards off across an open glade. It was in a good stalking country, but the wind was unfavourable and I waited for it to shift—waited too long, as it proved, for something frightened the beast and he made off before I could get a shot at him. When I first saw him he was shuffling along and rooting in the ground, so that he looked like a great pig. Then he began to turn over the stones and logs to hunt for insects, small reptiles, and the like. A moderate-sized stone he would turn over with a single clap of his paw, and then plunge his nose down into the hollow to gobble up the small creatures beneath, while still dazed by the light. The big logs and rocks he would try and worry at with both paws ; once, over-exerting his clumsy strength, he lost his grip and rolled clean on his back. Under some of the

logs he evidently found mice and chipmunks ; then, as soon as the log was overturned, he would be seen jumping about with grotesque agility, and making quick dabs here and there, as the little scurrying rodent turned and twisted, until at last he put his paw on it and scooped it up into his mouth. Sometimes, probably when he smelt the mice underneath, he would cautiously turn the log over with one paw, holding the other lifted and ready to strike. Now and then he would halt and sniff the air in every direction, and it was after one of these halts that he suddenly shuffled off to the woods."

"The best time to shoot bears," writes Rowan, "is in the month of August, when they come out on the plains and barrens for blueberries. I have seldom found a bear when I have been looking for them, though I have seen and shot several when salmon-fishing and small-game-shooting. On one occasion, when partridge-shooting, I heard my dogs making a tremendous fuss, and ran up, expecting to find them engaged with a porcupine. They were running round a huge bear, who did not seem much put out, but now and then made an ugly 'wipe' at the dogs with his paw. As the dogs engaged his attention he allowed

me to come up to within eight or ten yards, when I rolled him over with a couple of charges of No. 6 shot. In some parts of Canada a reward of \$3 is given by the Government for each bear killed ; but this incentive is not needed. There is a gun in every settler's house in Canada, and a young fellow who is only too glad of the chance of using it. Where bears have killed sheep they invariably return to the carcasses on the following night, when they often fall victims to their love of the injured settler's mutton."

I remember one night joining a party to watch near the carcase of a calf that had been killed by a bear. This was in the neighbourhood of Lake Kepeewa. After a breathless silence of two hours we heard stealthy footsteps approaching and several dark forms appeared. Soon the din and confusion became unbearable, so by mutual agreement we all fired together. There was a rush and scamper, and when we approached the spot we found a large dead wolf.

A cross-bred bulldog-bloodhound will fearlessly attack a bear, and a colley-hound lurcher is excellent for deer. Americans prefer pointers to setters for grouse and partridge ; personally, I have generally hunted with a small well-trained

Sussex spaniel. The cost of shipping dogs to Canada is £3 a head. Though I take exception to Mr. Rowan's statement, "It is next to impossible to buy a well-trained dog in Canada," yet a sportsman always prefers his own dog as well as his own gun. What is required is a strong, hardy, all-round dog, an animal that will retrieve by land or water, and work a winged duck by the nose through the intricacies of the most tangled swamp. "He must also be a good dog in thick cover, free from chase, a close hunter, and of high courage." We find these qualities combined in the spaniel.

If broken to field and hedgerow shooting in England, spaniels readily fall into all Canadian shooting. They should hunt quite mute, except when they flush a bird or get on a hot scent. These dogs make as good retrievers as any in the world. "What English sportsmen see to admire in that big, heavy-looking breed of dog, the so-called 'retriever,'" says Rowan, "I do not know. Almost any dog can be taught to retrieve, and the spaniel, from his industry in following up foot-scent, his perseverance, his courage, and his activity, seems to me to be a breed particularly suited for retrieving purposes.

The Irish retriever is full of pluck, a dashing water-dog, very intelligent, and a capital companion, but he is too impulsive. When game is in view he is positively irrepressible, and is addicted to hunting by the eye in preference to the nose. A big rough terrier is by no means the worst sort of dog."

President Roosevelt writes: "Every settler is apt to have four or five large mongrel dogs with hound blood in them, which serve to drive off beasts of prey from the sheepfold and cattle-shed, and are also used when the occasion suits in regular hunting, whether after bear or deer. During the last score of years an entirely different type of dog from the foxhound has firmly established itself in the field of American sport. This is the greyhound, whether the smooth-haired, or the rough-coated Scotch deerhound."

Many army officers posted in the far West use greyhounds to course the jack rabbit, coyote, and sometimes deer, antelope, and grey wolf.

Young bears are very playful and gentle in confinement up to a certain age, but they are apt to become treacherous as they grow older.

Mr. Rowan saw a cub at Campbelton, on the Restigouche, that had been suckled by a squaw.

I will now relate a trapper's story.

Bauman, when a young man, was trapping with a partner among the mountains dividing the forks of the Salmon from the head of Wisdom River. Not having had much luck, he and his partner determined to go up into a particularly wild and lonely pass through which ran a small stream said to contain many beaver. The pass had an evil reputation, because the year before a solitary hunter who had wandered into it was there slain, seemingly by a wild beast, the half-eaten remains being afterwards found by some mining prospectors who had passed his camp only the night before.

The memory of this event, however, weighed very lightly with the two trappers, who were as adventurous and hardy as others of their kind. They took their two lean mountain ponies to the foot of the pass, where they left them in an open beaver-meadow, the rocky timber-clad ground being from thence onwards impracticable for horses. They then struck out on foot through the vast gloomy forest, and in about four hours reached a little open glade,

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where they had concluded to camp, as signs of game were plentiful.

There was still an hour or two of daylight left, and after building a brush lean-to and throwing down and opening their packs, they started up stream. The country was very dense and hard to travel through, as there was much down timber, although here and there the sombre woodland was broken by small glades of mountain grass. At dusk they again reached camp. The glade in which it was pitched was not many yards wide, the tall, close-set pines and firs rising round it like a wall. On one side was a little stream, beyond which rose the steep mountain-slopes, covered with the unbroken growth of the evergreen forest.

They were surprised to find that during their short absence, something, apparently a bear, had visited camp, and had rummaged about among their things, scattering the contents of their packs, and in sheer wantonness destroying their lean-to. The footprints of the beast were quite plain, but at first they paid no particular heed to them, busying themselves with rebuilding the lean-to, laying out their beds and stores, and lighting a fire.

While Bauman was making ready supper, it being already dark, his companion began to examine the tracks more closely, and soon took a brand from the fire to follow them up, where the intruder had walked along a game trail after leaving the camp. When the brand flickered out, he returned and took another, repeating his inspection of the footprints very closely. Coming back to the fire, he stood by it a minute or two, peering out into the darkness, and suddenly remarked : " Bauman, that bear has been walking on two legs." Bauman laughed at this, but his partner insisted that he was right, and upon again examining the tracks with a torch, they certainly did seem to be made by but two paws, or feet. However, it was too dark to make sure. After discussing whether the footprints were possibly those of a human being, and coming to the conclusion that they could not be, the two men rolled up in their blankets, and went to sleep under the lean-to.

At midnight Bauman was awakened by some noise, and sat up in his blankets. As he did so, his nostrils were struck by a strong, wild-beast odour, and he caught the loom of a great body in the darkness at the mouth of the

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lean-to. Grasping his rifle, he fired at the vague, threatening shadow, but must have missed, for immediately afterwards he heard the smashing of the underwood as the thing, whatever it was, rushed off into the impenetrable blackness of the forest and the night.

After this, the two men slept but little, sitting up by the re-kindled fire, but they heard nothing more. In the morning they started to look out for the few traps they had set the previous evening, and to put new ones out. By an unspoken agreement they kept together all day, and returned to camp towards evening.

On nearing it they saw, hardly to their astonishment, that the lean-to had been again torn down. The visitor of the preceding day had returned, and in wanton malice had tossed about their camp, kit, and bedding, and destroyed the shanty. The ground was marked up by its tracks, and on leaving the camp it had gone along the soft earth by the brook, where the footprints were as plain as if on snow, and, after a careful scrutiny of the trail, it certainly did seem as if, whatever the thing was, it had walked off on but two legs.

The men, thoroughly uneasy, gathered a

great heap of dead logs, and kept up a roaring fire throughout the night, one or the other keeping on guard most of the time. About midnight the thing came down through the forest opposite, across the brook, and stayed there on the hillside for nearly an hour. They could hear the branches crackle as it moved about, and several times uttered a harsh, grating, long-drawn moan, a peculiarly sinister sound. Yet it did not venture near the fire. In the morning the two trappers, after discussing the strange events of the last thirty-six hours, decided that they would shoulder their packs and leave the valley that afternoon. They were the more ready to do this because, in spite of seeing a good deal of game sign, they had caught very little fur. However, it was necessary first to go along the line of their traps and gather them, and this they started to do.

All the morning they kept together, picking up trap after trap, each one empty. On first leaving camp they had the disagreeable sensation of being followed. In the dense spruce thickets they occasionally heard a branch snap after they had passed ; and now and then there were slight

rustling noises among the small pines to one side of them.

At noon they were back within a couple of miles of camp. In the high, bright sunlight their fears seemed absurd to two armed men, accustomed as they were, through long years of lonely wandering in the wilderness, to face every kind of danger from man, brute, or element. There were still three beaver-traps to collect from a little pond in a wide ravine near by. Bauman volunteered to gather these and bring them in, while his companion went ahead to camp and make ready the packs.

On reaching the ponds Bauman found three beavers in the traps, one of which had been pulled loose and carried into a beaver-house. He took several hours in securing and preparing the beaver, and when he started homewards he marked with some uneasiness how low the sun was getting. As he hurried towards camp, under the tall trees, the silence and desolation of the forest weighed on him. His feet made no sound on the pine-needles, and the slanting sun-rays, striking through among the straight trunks, made a gay twilight in which objects at a distance glimmered indistinctly. There was nothing to

break the ghostly stillness which, when there is no breeze, always broods over these sombre primeval forests.

At last he came to the edge of the little glade where the camp lay, and shouted as he approached it, but got no answer. The camp fire had gone out, though the thin blue smoke was still curling upwards. Near it lay the packs, wrapped and arranged. At first Bauman could see nobody; nor did he receive an answer to his call. Stepping forward he again shouted, and as he did so his eye fell on the body of his friend, stretched beside the trunk of a great fallen spruce. Rushing towards it the horrified trapper found that the body was still warm, but that the neck had been broken, while there were four great fang-marks in the throat.

The footmarks of the unknown beast, printed deep in the soft soil, told the whole story. The unfortunate man, having finished his packing, had sat down on the spruce log with his face to the fire, and his back to the dense woods, to wait for his companion. While thus waiting, his monstrous assailant, which must have been lurking near by in the woods, waiting for a chance to catch one of the adventurers unprepared, came

silently up from behind, walking with long, noiseless steps and seemingly still on two legs. Evidently unheard, it reached the man, and broke his neck by wrenching his head back with its forepaws, while it buried its teeth in his throat. It had not eaten the body, but apparently had romped and gambolled round it in uncouth, ferocious glee, occasionally rolling over and over it, and had then fled back into the soundless depths of the woods.

Bauman, utterly unnerved, and believing that the creature with which he had to deal was something either half human or half devil, abandoned everything but his rifle and struck off at speed down the pass, not halting until he reached the beaver-meadows, where the hobbled ponies were still grazing. Mounting, he rode onwards through the night, until far beyond the reach of pursuit.

President Roosevelt, referring to the trapper, remarks :—

“In a few wild spots, here and there in the neighbourhood of the Great Upper Lakes, there still lingers an occasional representative of the old wilderness hunters. They do their hunting on foot, occasionally with the help of a single trailing

dog. In Maine they are as apt to kill moose as caribou, deer, and bear ; but elsewhere an occasional cougar or wolf are the beasts of chase which they follow."

Nowadays as these old hunters die there is no one to take their places, though there are still plenty of backwood settlers who do a great deal of hunting and trapping. Such an old hunter rarely makes his appearance at the settlements except to dispose of his peltry and hides in exchange for cartridges and provisions, and he leads a life of such lonely isolation as to insure his individual characteristics developing into peculiarities.

Generally the weapon mainly relied on by these old hunters is the rifle ; and occasionally one will be found even to this day who uses a muzzle-loader.

The following is an extract from my notes on a visit to an old trapper fourteen years ago :—

"Muskoka District, Freeman's Land, February, 1888. As I approached the small clearing my attention was drawn to a bucket, a recently opened water-hole, and the faint sound of chopping—sure indications of his presence. I found him busily engaged in chopping a supply of cord wood.*

* A cord is a measure of wood containing 128 cubic feet.

He did not pause in his work as I drove past, nor heed my friendly shout of 'Halloo, Joe!' This did not offend me, as I had heard of his eccentric habits. I drove directly to the shed, unhitched, watered, and fed my ponies, and then strolled leisurely into the hut. There were no chairs, but plenty of old boxes piled in a corner. I selected one of these, and drawing it near to the fire warmed myself. No one had welcomed me, but (in those days) in Muskoka a traveller did not stand on ceremony. Soon I heard the tramp of heavy moccasins on the crisp snow, notifying me of Joe's coming home. He entered, staggering under a huge armful of wood logs. With a mere warning of 'by leave' and 'legs,' he threw the whole load upon the floor in such close proximity to my feet that had I not quickly and deftly raised them, I should probably have limped for many a day. There was no apology; everything was taken as a matter of course, if one man was busy and another idle—the idle man should keep his eyes open, and await his opportunity to do his share when the time came. Muskoka settlers dislike watchers, and trappers hate them. Though Joe had made no remarks, he soon became very

busy preparing a meal for his guest. This meal may have been tasty, but it certainly did not look so. A well-worn frying-pan was much to the front as a weapon of culinary art. Eggs were broken over a lump of pork, and much stirring was resorted to amidst the sickly frizzle of fat. Joe entered upon the accomplishments of a cook with much zeal and amusing solemnity.

“At length I became weary of this long silence. To attract his attention I shuffled my feet, trimmed the stove, and performed other acts of nervous impatience. I endeavoured to start a conversation, and began in a cheery tone to inquire if he had had good luck lately with his traps. The question was ill-chosen and unfortunate, because my chief reason for stopping here was to gain information as to my route. Now, probably, he would interpret my journey into a desire to poach upon his preserves. He did not answer the question, but raising one eye half-closed, he looked me up and down from the snow on my feet to the icicles on my fur cap, and then violently stirred the fry. Five minutes passed in silence, and then Joe’s face seemed to brighten. According to his unquestionable authority, the savoury food was cooked

to a turn. Eagerly stretching out both hands, he seized the handle, and shook the brown mass with a violence and energy that would have broken a man's neck unless it had been made of iron. He then whacked the contents upon a piece of board, and gave me a forcible kick. Being very hungry, I drew my pocket-knife and joined heartily in the meal. When we had finished Joe stared at me for at least a minute, and then came the word 'Spavined.' What did he mean? Was he spavined, or was I spavined?' Then the thought of my ponies entered my mind and everything became clear. When Joe saw me coming he had fixed his eyes on one of my Indian ponies.

"Joe was a 'holy terror' on arguments, so I knew it would be better not to take exception to his remark. I found it exceedingly difficult to draw the slightest information out of him. He had himself blazed a path to Bull, Echo, Clear, and Long Lakes, and knew almost every yard of the country for twenty miles round. Possibly he had seen me immerge from the bush on his side of the lake, and his suspicions had been aroused. Whenever I referred to my journey to Huron a curious expression came

over his face, that was far more eloquent in its protest than any flights of oratory. I assured him that I had no idea of squatting within ten miles of his most distant trap, and that my desire was rather for a bit of excitement and adventure ; but to all and everything I urged he merely continued to shake his head and look knowing.

“As evening approached, pipes and a whisky jar were produced, and under these influences Joe’s stiffness and reserve entirely vanished. The spirit seemed to impart new life and youth to him. He became quite loquacious while he rehearsed some of his wildest adventures and exploits as a pioneer hunter. He was still wary of me, and whenever I endeavoured to turn the conversation to myself and my route he quickly changed it. Shortly after our pipes we visited the ponies, watered, fed, and bedded them, and then returned for a final smoke before retiring for the night. Climbing up into a lofty bunk, I soon arranged my robes and furs, and fell into a deep sleep.”

“A charge of buckshot at thirty yards is always fatal,” writes Mr. John Rowan. “I cut down two bears in great style with a large No. 6

bore single-barrel that I brought with me for goose-shooting, charge 8 drachms powder and thirty buckshot—one at a distance of fifty-five yards. In bear-shooting even more than in other large-game-shooting, the sportsman should always wait for a broadside shot, and aim 6 in. or 8 in. behind the shoulder, and rather better than half-way up. Ordinary prudence," he adds, "ought to prevent a man from going too close to a crippled or dying bear, or, indeed, to any other powerful animal."

The fur of bears is at its prime in the spring, and this is the best time to trap them, as they are so hungry that they will devour almost anything eatable. The "deadfall" is perhaps the most common method used for securing bruin, and I visited one of these traps last year near Deer Lake. It consisted of a camp-like shelter over the entrance of which a heavily-weighted log was adjusted, so that when the bear touched the bait it would come down on the small of his back. A couple of good choppers will set and construct half a dozen deadfalls in the course of a day. They are baited with mutton, beef, pork, fish, partridge—anything, in fact, so long as it is pretty high and smells.

Steel traps are preferred by the trapper because the deadfalls kill the bear almost immediately, and consequently require constant attention, whereas the bear caught by a limb lives for seven or eight days. The steel trap is never chained to a tree, because the bear in his first struggles will smash anything that resists him, but when it is chained to a log he drags it after him for a short distance, and then gets tired out. Rope-snares made fast to strong spring poles are also used with success on their paths and roads.

The camping outfit varies according to fancy. The following are the most necessary requirements :—

Equipment.—Ridge Tent, No. 3. The pole can be carried from place to place, and pins and uprights cut on landing. For a larger party a smaller tent to shelter the “cook” and the provisions is necessary. Axe, hatchet, deep pot or bake-kettle, saucepan, frying-pan, gridiron, kettle, teapot, long iron spoon, long iron fork, butcher-knife, knives, forks, and spoons, tin washdish, round tin dish, pans, tin cups, tin or thick earthenware plates, water-pail, sugar, salt, pepper, and tea cans, two hand lanterns for candles.

Provisions.—Biscuits, flour, sides of clear bacon sewn in canvas, tea, sugar, salt, pepper, soap in bars, condensed milk, raisins, beans, dried apples, rice, matches, sperm-candles.

Clothing.—One change of underclothing, flannel shirt, and woollen trousers; three or four pairs of wool socks, overcoat or macintosh, heavy long boots for day (or moccasins), pair easy old gaiter-boots, leather slippers for camp, extra cap, handy bag for small things, large dunnage bag to hold all clothing and warm blankets.

I have already hinted that Van Doughnuts' clearing provides sleeping accommodation, etc., but I should strongly advise whisky, lunch tongues, hams, biscuits, meats in glass jars, etc., to accompany the party. We found Norfolk Scotch tweeds with stockings, knickerbockers, etc., excellent for fishing, and shooting-boots with easy gaiters answered well for the bush.

A celebrated hunter gives a very small list of necessities for an expedition:—

“The blanket and oilskin slicker were rolled and strapped behind the saddle; for provisions I carried salt, a small bag of hard tack, and a little tea and sugar, with a metal cup in which

to boil my water. The rifle and a score of cartridges in my woven belt completed my outfit. On my journey I shot two prairie chickens from a covey in the bottom of a brush coulie."

I would strongly advise sportsmen to bring with them from England three warm flannel shirts, vests, socks, overcoat, boots, guns, and cartridges. Everything new and of the best quality—otherwise Canada could supply the whole outfit. An experienced authority says: "As regards rough clothing—cloth, flannels, woollen socks and stockings, etc., etc.—all these can be bought cheaper in Canada than in England, and quite as good. Canadian homespun is famous stuff." For shooting-dress I recommend a good warm Scotch tweed. A Bond Street tailor, I believe, still has an establishment in Toronto. Though I doubt if the total expense of a month at Crane and Blackstone Lakes, with explorations to Lake Huron, etc., would cost more than £100 per head, inclusive of travelling from England and back, yet a liberal margin would be covered for four guns with two men-servants (Jack-of-all-trades), at a total expenditure of £500. This would, of course, cover all inci-

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dental expenses of four guides, etc. Two days' rest should be made at Toronto, where English 'Varsity or club men are always welcomed, and a trip to the Yacht Club is worth making. The Queen's Hotel is the best place to stop.

V

THE WOLF OF MUSKOKA

Canis occidentalis

THE grey wolf, or giant wolf (McCall), very doubtfully distinct from the European wolf (*Canis lupus*), is the only species of the wolf family I have actually shot at during my travels in Muskoka. Once I saw a large white wolf sitting upon the top of a grassy bank, but the distance was so great that I mistook it for a large dog.

Last year I sketched a splendid specimen of the giant wolf, and I hope soon we shall have one of these creatures in our London Zoological Gardens.*

The grey wolf is remarkable for its great fleetness, powers of endurance, and courage. When I viewed this brute for the first time, I could not help considering him a formidable and dangerous foe. The head is of a large size and

* The timber wolves in the Gardens are poor specimens, and convey no idea of "the Giant Wolf."—St. M. P.



"THIS WOLF, WHO WAS FAR IN ADVANCE OF THE REST, MADE A SPRING."

[See p. 163.]

breadth, the tail short and covered with bushy hair, feet broad, colour dark brindle grey. Some hunters describe its length as four feet, but all the grey wolves I have seen have been larger than this.

Some writers neglect to mention the most striking characteristic of this animal, *viz.*, the extraordinary size of its nostrils, and the muscular powers of its fierce, gaping jaws. These points appealed to me at once in support of Colonel McCall's theory that the giant wolf is a distinct species. I have examined at least a dozen of these creatures within a few yards of where they stood.

Mr. Van Doughnuts told me last year of an adventure he had with a huge grey wolf, whilst awaiting the appearance of a buck on a deer-run in the forests of Crane Lake. This happened quite recently. The wolf being driven from his lair by the hounds, rushed toward the spot where this hardy old hunter stood in readiness. Van Doughnuts tells his story in such an interesting and amusing manner, that I will not trust my memory to recall it (not having had my note-book to hand at the time). His account, however, quite tallies with my own

observations and studies. The grey wolf will not attack a man unless cornered, and then will fight desperately for his life.

Once, while riding on horseback through the forests, I was followed at a distance by two of these wolves, but when I dismounted, and threw a piece of wood in their direction, they rushed off in apparent terror. I can recall no instance of a man being attacked in Muskoka by grey wolves during the day. We heard wolves once last year as we were paddling home late at night. The sounds seemed to come from the rocky heights in the neighbourhood of an inland lake near the end of Crane Lake.

The packs of American wolves usually consist of various shades of colour. The varieties, with more or less of black, continue to increase as we proceed further to the south, and in Florida I found the prevailing colour of the wolves was black.

Before relating my own personal observations and experiences, I will quote from the testimony of others as to the savage boldness of wolves in America. Audubon and Bachman quote the following :—

“Two young negroes, who resided near the

banks of the Ohio, in the lower part of the state of Kentucky, about thirty years ago, had sweet-hearts living in another plantation, four miles distant. After the labours of the day were over, they frequently visited the fair ladies of their choice, the nearest way to whose dwelling lay directly across a large cane-brake. As to the lover every moment is precious, they usually took this route to save time. Winter had set in cold, dark, and gloomy, and after sunset scarcely a glimpse of light or glow of warmth were to be found in that dreary swamp, except in the eyes and bosoms of the ardent youths who traversed these gloomy solitudes.

“One night they set forth over a thin crust of snow. Prudent, to a certain degree, the lovers carried their axes on their shoulders, and walked as briskly as the narrow path would allow. Some transient glimpses of light now and then met their eyes in the more open spaces between the trees, or when the heavy drifting clouds parting at times allowed a star to peep forth on the desolate scene. Fearfully, a long and frightful howl burst upon them, and they were instantly aware that it proceeded from a troop of hungry and perhaps desperate wolves. They paused for

a moment and a dismal silence succeeded. All was dark, save a few feet of the snow-covered ground immediately in front of them. They resumed their pace hastily, with their axes in their hands prepared for an attack. Suddenly the foremost man was assailed by several wolves, which seized on him, and inflicted terrible wounds with their fangs on his legs and arms, and as they were followed by many others as ravenous as themselves, several sprang at the breast of his companion, and dragged him to the ground. Both struggled manfully against their foes, but in a short time one of the negroes had ceased to move, and the other, reduced in strength and perhaps despairing of aiding his companion or even saving his own life, threw down his axe, sprang into the branch of a tree, and speedily gained a place of safety amid the boughs. Here he passed a miserable night, and the next morning the bones of his friend lay scattered around on the snow, which was stained with his blood. Three dead wolves lay near, but the rest of the pack had disappeared ; and Scipio, sliding to the ground, recovered the axes and returned home to relate the terrible catastrophe."

In heading this section "The Wolf of

Muskoka" I do not wish to imply that these creatures abound in the neighbourhood of Lake Muskoka or Lake Rosseau, though I heard them sometimes while crossing the ice during the winter of 1889. They are still to be found near Crane Lake and Deer Lake, and it is no uncommon event to see them crossing these lakes at the present time. Wolves can not be hunted in this district until the winter, and probably the most successful method is to lure them to some spot with a bait, and then fire upon them while they are sleepy with an over-feed. Sportsmen ambitious to kill wolves must be robust in constitution and able to pursue long journeys on foot. Indian guides are the only men willing to undertake such a hunting party, and no advice or criticism must be given to a redskin, or else he may suddenly disappear.

Mr. J. G. Millais, who has recently returned from a successful exploration trip to a little-known part of Central Newfoundland, quotes the experience of a previous explorer as follows :—

"The leader was a good man, and a good geographer, but had little knowledge of Indians and their ways. He knew how to equip an expedition and how to map, but in this case, what

was quite an important matter, he did not possess tact, nor did he know that it was unwise to contradict a red-man flatly, and differ on the subject of a country of which as yet he knew nothing. Arrived at St. John's Lake, the leader turned to a man from the coast, who likewise had never been so far before, and said : ' Jim, how long is this lake ? ' ' Fourteen miles, boss,' replied the man. ' Lake five miles long,' broke in the Indian. ' I'm sure it is double that distance,' unwisely suggested the first white man, gazing into the hazy distance. The Indian gave a grunt, and half an hour afterwards the second expedition to St. John's Lake was lamenting the loss of its guide. The whole party then immediately returned to the coast."—*Geographical Journal*, September, 1903.

This disappointing experience is worthy of mention ; being testimony as recent as my last visit to Muskoka, and therefore a guide to others.

Wolves can be tamed if procured as cubs, and they become very interesting pets. Audubon writes :—

" Once, when we were travelling on foot not far from the southern boundary of Kentucky,

we fell in with a wolf, following a man with a rifle on his shoulders. On speaking to him about the animal, he assured us that it was as tame and gentle as any dog, and that he had never met with a dog that could trail a deer better. We were so much struck with this account and the noble appearance of the wolf, that we offered him one hundred dollars for it; but the owner would not part at any price."

It is difficult to describe the savage voice of a hungry wolf. It might be likened to something between the dismal moaning of a watch-dog on a moonlight night, and the baying of a deer-hound running on a strong scent. During a winter trip to the Indians (1889) I had an exciting and dangerous night adventure. The wolves followed me for several hours, and I could distinguish their dark forms upon the ice at one time only a hundred yards away. Whether they were pursuing me for my Indian ponies or myself, I cannot say.

I have seen hybrids, the offspring of the wolf and the cur dog, and also their mixed broods, some of which resemble the wolf, and others the dog. These cross-bred wolves prove valuable for bear-hunting, and the Indians use them for

dragging their stores. The gait and habits of wolves are much the same as those of the common dog, and the number of young brought forth at a litter is about the same. The wolves of the prairies form burrows, wherein they bring forth their young. These burrows have more than one entrance; they produce from six to eleven at a birth, of which there are seldom two alike in colour.

The wolf lives to a great age, and does not change its colour with increase of years. Mr. Van Doughnuts once found wolf-cubs hidden in a hollow log near Crane Lake.

Fourteen years ago I had a terrible journey over the ice with the sound of wolves on my trail for hours. I finally took refuge in the rough hut of an unknown trapper, who related to me a personal experience of his own, as I sat beside blazing logs smoking my pipe. I cannot be responsible for the truth of this story, nor do I expect the old man still lives to confirm it, but as I made notes at the time I will merely quote from my book.

“*January, 1889.*—Spending the night in a log-hut with a rough old trapper—lost my way—had a scare from wolves—don’t know what

part of Muskoka this is—believe it is Freeman's Land" (*i.e.* anybody's land).

The following is the trapper's wolf-story:—

"The sleigh was difficult to jam from the inside to prevent attacks from wild beasts or Indians. I was very exhausted after I had completed my arrangements, and did not trouble to light a fire, finding the cave comfortable after the cold night air. There was a large heap of dry leaves, and these I shovelled together to make a bed, and it was not long before I fell asleep.

"Lying back some twenty yards from the cavern's entrance, the wild sounds of night were inaudible. Had it been otherwise, my slumbers would not have been peaceful. A pack of hungry wolves, unable to overtake the swift deer while the snow's crust continued in its present state, had scented me out as an intruder upon their domains, and like a horde of furies had rushed along my trail until they ran me to earth at the cave. Had I opened my eyes during that dark night I should have seen innumerable bright fiery eyes peering through the openings of my frail barrier. I was, however, so overcome by weariness, that the usual nervous restlessness of conscious danger did not trouble me. I believed

that nothing could reach me without the removal of the sleigh, and this could not be accomplished without a noise sufficient to awaken me. The wolves being unable to force themselves through, began to fight furiously among themselves, biting, snarling, and snapping with their sharp teeth as they rushed to and fro jumping over each other, or standing for an instant with their front paws upon the back of a companion, whose head was thrust fiercely forward among the *débris* of the door. In this way they formed a living ladder reaching to the top. One huge brute, more ravenous than the rest, actually succeeded in wedging his head and shoulders against the roof. Maddened by hunger and regardless of his fate, he scraped and tore with his teeth until the whole fabric trembled and tottered. It was at this moment that the wolves raised a howl, as though they would awaken the dead, and I drowsily opened my eyes and looked about me. It was very dark, but I knew that my rifle lay close by my side, loaded and ready for use. As I listened to the hideous scuffling and noise, I could not resist an uncanny sensation, and I trembled. I seized my rifle, and tried to look along the barrel preparatory to risking a shot,

but beyond indistinct shadows that appeared and disappeared I could see nothing. As I hesitated, the huge wolf that had been shaking my barricade fell into the cave with a thud. I expected his example to be quickly followed, and that I should be torn to pieces and devoured.

"The wolf soon recovered from his fall, but finding himself cut off from the rest his courage began to wane, and instead of rushing upon me he slunk back, showing his ugly teeth, and uttering hideous snarls. He walked slowly up and down as far away from me as possible, grazing his sides against the sharp rock as he dashed himself round. His appearance in this attitude of mad terror was loathsome and revolting. Whenever I moved he stopped, and displayed his white glittering teeth. This afforded me a mark, and without delay I fired a bullet from the rifle aimed directly between the gaping jaws. For an instant there was silence, and I believed the shot had proved fatal. Then the noises from within and without surpass description. The wounded wolf reared upon his hind legs and leaped into the air, twisting his body as he fell rolling over and over upon the ground, and uttering savage moans.

"Sometimes in blind agony and terror he fell against me as I stood with hunting-knife in hand to receive him. During these mad careerings his jaws were incessantly opened and shut with a snap, as if he were striving to rend the air he breathed. These bites into vacancy gave me some nasty wounds, and had not my thick robes protected me, I should have been seriously injured. Whenever he came within my reach I struck at him with the knife, stepping back as I did so to avoid his bite. On one occasion I knocked my head violently and staggered half-stunned against the rock ; but the pain and blood flowing from many wounds, prevented me from becoming unconscious. Such a fight in such a place, was terrible, and when his struggles and breathing ceased I felt devoutly thankful.

"There was no more sleep for me that night, and even if I had felt so disposed, my wounds throbbed too much to permit it. I spent much time firing at the wolves outside, frequently hearing a howl of pain denoting a wound.

"With the first streak of dawn, every wolf scampered off as though by a word of command. Knowing that danger was now over, I thrust the barrier aside, and let in the cold morning

air. The events of the previous night were marked upon the snow. In some places the ground was red with blood, and here and there, drawn up into strange positions lay the bodies of many dead. These bodies had been bitten and mauled as though in a fight, and flesh rent from the carcase. Imagining these had died fighting among themselves, I examined them, but found in each case a bullet mark."

The above story would have been unintelligible unless put into my own form of expression, but the facts agree somewhat with Lieutenant Chas. Hoskins's experiences of the savage nature and strength of the grey wolf.

He had mounted his horse just before sunset, one day in June, to breathe for an hour the fresher air, and had ridden at a leisurely pace about three-quarters of a mile from the fort—his dogs, four or five greyhounds, were following listlessly at his heels, dreaming as little as himself of seeing a wolf—when on a sudden, from a small clump of shumach bushes, immediately at his side, there sprang an enormous giant wolf. By one of those instinctive impulses which it is difficult to describe, horse and dogs were launched upon him before an eye could twinkle.

The wolf had but a few yards the start ; and under such circumstances, although the fleetest of his congeners, he stood no chance of escaping from his still fleetier enemies ; in fact, before he had run fifty yards he was caught by the flanks and stopped. Here a most furious fight commenced : it is a well-known fact that the greyhound is sometimes a severe fighter, owing to his great activity and his quick, slashing snap, and Hoskins's dogs were, in addition, in the habit of coursing the prairie-wolf during the fall and winter months, on which occasions the affair was very generally, after a short chase, terminated in about one minute, by the victim having his throat and bowels torn into ribands. This, however, was a different affair ; they had encountered an ugly customer, and the battle was long and of varied aspect.

Sometimes the wolf would break entirely clear from the dogs, leaving several of them floored ; again, however, within a few yards he would be checked, and the battle resumed, so that during a long struggle there was little change of ground.

The fight was continued in this way, the prospect of victory or of defeat frequently

changing, until both parties were quite exhausted. And now, here lay the wolf in the centre, with his tongue hanging from his jaws, and at the distance of a few feet the dogs around him, bleeding and panting for breath. At this juncture, Hoskins, who had not even a penknife in his pocket, was unable to terminate the affair; he sat upon his horse, a silent and admiring spectator of the strange scene. At length, when he thought his dogs had somewhat recovered their breath, he called on them to return to the charge. Old Cleon, a black dog of great strength and courage, was the only one who obeyed the summons—he sprang fiercely at the wolf's throat; the latter, however, who had risen to his feet, by a well-timed snap, seized Cleon at the back of the neck, and soon was savagely grinding away on the poor fellow's skull with his immense jaws. This was too much for any hunter to witness—a favourite dog held helpless in a grip that threatened very speedily to end his days. Hoskins was an experienced hunter, and a very cool and determined man—he afterwards fell at the battle of Monterey, Mexico; on this occasion he sprang from his horse and seized the wolf by the hind leg, and by a violent

jerk caused him to release the dog, but only to find, in less than an instant, the jaws of the monster clamped upon his own leg.

The wolf, however, made no effort to shake or lacerate the wound : at the same time it occurred to the hunter that this would be the only effect of any exertion on his own part to extricate his limb ; and therefore, with the wolf's hind leg in his right hand, and his left leg in the wolf's jaws, he stood perfectly quiet, while poor Cleon, whose head was covered with blood, lay before him, apparently more dead than alive. In a moment, however, Cleon recovered and raised his head : and then his master spoke to him again. Promptly the old fellow obeyed the call, and this time he made good his hold on the wolf's throat, whereupon our hunter's leg was immediately released. At this juncture a Cherokee lad, who was on his way across the plain, came up ; but neither had he a knife nor any other weapon. Hoskins then, as his only resource, made a slip noose with the reins of his bridle, and with the assistance of the boy, got this over the wolf's head, when, pulling on the opposite ends, they succeeded in strangling the already exhausted animal.

Wolves are very destructive to sheep and cattle in the neighbourhoods where they abound, and, more for the craving for horseflesh than for human flesh, they will follow a sleigh for miles. An old pioneer settler told me of an exciting scene he once witnessed, between an Indian pony and a small pack of wolves ; and as this story has never been published, and I believe is probable, I will repeat it.

“The pursuers and pursued were drawing closer, and, as I watched, one horse stumbled and fell. A huge wolf immediately sprang at his throat, and, before he could regain his feet, the sharp teeth were buried in his flesh. After a fierce struggle the wolf was shaken off, and then followed a brief but terrible battle. Striking out bravely and desperately with fore and hind legs, he rolled many a would-be assailant far away from his reach. Each time a wolf sprang, he would tear away with his teeth a piece of living flesh, and streams of blood flowed from many ugly wounds. The wolves were more than once held at bay : two or three, badly hurt, were to be seen limping off to a safe distance, where, with white glittering teeth and skulking gait, they joined with the rest in circling round their victim.

So wonderfully did the pony sustain the unequal fight, that every minute I expected to see him make a break for liberty.

“The danger of my own position now became apparent, so I began to consider the wisdom of remaining. To descend was dangerous, but to remain seemed more so. In turning my head in different directions, my attention was drawn away from the fight in the swamp ; but when I looked again my horse was still standing. One dead wolf, with his skull smashed to a pulp, lay at a short distance as the result of another attack ; but blood was flowing so freely, that the movements of the poor creature had become slow and painful. It was evident that he would soon perish from loss of blood. Each time the wolves made a rush he bowed his neck, turned back his ears, and, half-facing round, showed his teeth to bite. His heels, too, were driven out with a force and spirit that threatened destruction to his murderers.

“The mode of attack appeared pre-arranged, no two wolves rushing forward from the same vantage-ground, so that, though some were struck, the majority succeeded in wrenching off the flesh from their doomed victim. The sight was dis-

gusting, and when I could endure it no longer, I raised my rifle and fired two quick successive shots into their midst. One wolf jumped high and then fell dead, but my second shot did not act as I intended, but struck the pony and brought him to the ground in a dying state.

“The noise of the report produced a demoralising effect on the rest, who scampered away rapidly. For some seconds there was silence. Then a large dog-wolf, bolder than the rest, appeared, leading the whole pack at his heels, who rushed howling and fighting to devour their vanquished foe, whose feeble movements denoted merely the convulsive muscle-contractions that follow death. I did not wait to gaze upon the hideous feast that followed, nor their hilarity as they quarrelled over choice morsels. I seized this opportunity to run for my life.”

Mr. Roosevelt also tells a story of wolves attacking horses which may be included here.

“A man who was engaged in packing in the Cœur d’Alènes once witnessed such a feat on the part of a wolf. He was taking his pack-train down into a valley when he saw a horse grazing therein; it had been turned loose by another packing outfit, because it had become exhausted.

He lost sight of it as the trail went down a zig-zag, and while it was thus out of sight he suddenly heard it utter the appalling scream, unlike, and more dreadful than, any other sound, and one which a horse only utters in extreme fright or agony. The scream was repeated, and as he came in sight again he saw that a great wolf had attacked the horse. The poor animal had been bitten terribly in its haunches and was cowering upon them, while the wolf stood and looked at it a few paces off. In a moment or two the horse partially recovered and made a desperate bound forward, starting at full gallop. Immediately the wolf was after it, overhauled it in three or four jumps, and then seized it by the hock while its legs were extended, with such violence as to bring it completely on its haunches. It again screamed piteously ; and this time with a few savage snaps the wolf hamstrung and partially disembowelled it, and it fell over, having made no attempt to defend itself. I have heard of more than one incident of this kind. If a horse is a good fighter, however, as occasionally, though not often, happens, it is a most difficult prey for any wild beast ; and some veteran horses have no fear of wolves whatsoever, well knowing

that they can either strike them down with their fore-feet or repulse them by lashing out behind."

It is now fourteen years ago since I first heard the terrible scream of a horse, and perhaps my note written at the time may be of interest.

"I turned my attention to find some desirable camping-ground for the night, having the greatest dread of wolves. Suddenly I was alarmed by a hideous shriek, that came from the deep recesses of the woods. It was so unearthly that I paused in horror to listen. I did not know whether to advance or retire, and when the noise was repeated the forest seemed to take it up in long harmonious echoes. Again and again I heard the cry, each time more heartrending and piteous. A woman shrieking and yelling under Indian torture could hardly have produced more dreadful sounds. There was something crudely human in the voice. I began to ask myself, what creature could this be with human voice? I wondered whether it would prove to be a specimen of some unknown quadruped, and if I should have the honour of adding its name to zoological science. I recalled the recently discovered mammals, especially the ou-ka-la, or whistler of the Cascades, so closely allied to the beaver, musquash,

and prairie-dog. I remembered the story of the traveller who was filled with fear when aroused from sleep by a chorus of these whistlers—how he expected to hear the Indian war-cry, and be led to a cruel death ; and I grew eager to attribute my fears to some unknown denizen of those woods.

“Far away behind me stretched a large lake, while below lay the swamp with its drowned timber, leaving in places patches of open ground. The natural instinct of the hunter is to seek cover, whether it is needful for self-preservation or necessary to waylay the quarry.

“Carefully examining the loading of my rifle, I worked my way up a steep, rocky hill, and concealed myself behind a large boulder, and then searched the woods diligently. The noise ceased almost directly I had taken my stand, and though I waited for half an hour—as long as I dared with the darkness coming on—my curiosity seemed doomed to remain unsatisfied. It is phenomenal that sounds come and go in an inexplicable manner in the bush. I have often stood near a deer-trail, listening to the baying of the hounds and the long bounding strides of a buck. First the sounds would appear close

at hand, and then, without warning, everything would become gradually hushed and silent. Half an hour has passed, and I have become restless and incautious ; wandering, perhaps, a few yards from the sheltering tree-trunk, hoping to hear a hail to another run. Then, suddenly, I have heard an animal swiftly rushing towards me, and, with barely time to raise my rifle, a fine buck has bounded by, giving me a scare and start, such as one experiences when flushing a covey of partridges from a turnip-field.

“The swamp was bordered on one side by a thick undergrowth of saplings, and as I stood looking in this direction, they quickly parted hither and thither. To my surprise, first one and then the other of my Indian ponies appeared, and I caught the sound of the distant howl of wolves.”

Seventy or eighty years ago wolves abounded in Muskoka in extraordinary numbers, and an old trapper assured me he had known them to attack and destroy two men camped in the woods. This seems to agree with the opinion of Audubon and Bachman, so I may repeat what he told me.

A single wolf will never attack a man, and even three or four attracted by hunger to his

whereabouts, have, in every instance of my experience, been content to remain at a short distance, showing their hideous teeth, and uttering fierce, angry snarls, but, nevertheless, apparently afraid to attack. Wolves in remote uninhabited districts, where no bounty has been offered for their heads, collect in immense numbers, and have been known to congregate around large camps, hurling themselves fearlessly against the rough barriers, and fighting those within. Sixty years ago, while travelling to an Indian village, he found the ruins of a night camp. Apparently the travellers, while under the influence of drink, had been attacked, and only their skulls and bones remained. It appeared that they had fallen asleep, and before they could recover their weapons to defend themselves, blood was flowing from many wounds, and doubtless after a desperate struggle they fell, weak and fainting, and were overpowered.

"I shall never forget," he said, "the horror of the scene. The snow was trampled and covered with blood. Two long knives were almost enveloped with matted hair and congealed frozen blood. Each stage in the fight was so clearly denoted by the marks upon the snow, that it

was easy to follow them step by step. Standing with a feeling of sickening dread," he added, "my attention was drawn to a frightful moan.

"I followed the sound, and at length discovered a huge giant wolf lying upon his back with so many gashes and wounds that it was an amazement to me that he could have dragged his suffering body so far. Needless to say, I speedily despatched him, and, even when life had become extinct, I still continued to belabour him with blows as a revengeful relief to the memory of my dead countrymen. His skin was utterly useless when my arm could strike no more, so I left him there to rot, or feed the carrion birds."

To corroborate the above statement, Thomas McMurray writes :—

"In the early history of this region the first settlers certainly had a hard time of it, and we have heard many harrowing stories of the rigours of residence in Muskoka, and of the hardships of isolation bravely endured by the early pioneers, which for a time greatly deterred immigration. But though long the abode of solitude, save for the few hardy pioneers, and the many bears and wolves which used to infest the region, the

district has of recent years rapidly been brought within reach of civilisation.”—*Muskoka and Parry Sound*, by Thos. McMurray, 1871.

“The grey wolf,” says Rowan, “is a wandering animal, sometimes found in one district, sometimes in another, its movements depending a good deal upon those of its prey, *viz.*, the caribou and the Virginian deer. It is seldom seen by the hunter, though its tracks in the snow when in pursuit of deer are frequently met with. In my trapping experiences I only killed one of these animals, which I found in a deadfall set for bear, and baited with beaver meat. I am told that in summer they frequently prowl around the dams and lodges, on the chance of picking up a stray beaver. Their howl is most dismal, even more so than that of a chained-up dog. On one occasion, when moose-calling in a lake in New Brunswick, just as darkness set in, a wolf, in response to the melancholy note of our birch-bark trumpet, commenced a dismal howl on one end of the lake; he was presently answered by another in an opposite direction, and the howl or wail was taken up by two or three other animals in different directions all around us. Hearing the

same identical howl repeated at intervals through the evening, and echoing throughout the forest from every point of the compass, had a weird and supernatural effect."

Stone and Cram consider the grey wolf which formerly ranged in great packs over every part of the country the same as the wolf of Europe ; and it is practically certain that it is really only a variety of that species.

"Grey wolves," they state, "were always wandering, unsettled beasts, at times, especially in the winter, hunting up and down the country in great packs, and more rarely wandering alone or by twos and threes. Any sort of a country appears to suit them well enough, provided there is game to be had. If anything, they were more numerous in low, black swamps of hemlock and tamarack in the North and the everglades of Florida, than in the dense forests of mountainous countries and uplands. But above all else they preferred the wind-blown prairies of the West, where they followed the bison herds in their wandering after new and green pastures. The wolves seldom molested the buffaloes unless they were disabled by disease or sickness. The young calves were what they were after when

they skulked through the herd, dodging the old bulls and angry cow buffaloes in the tall bunch-grass of the plains. At present the alkali deserts, bad lands, and the barrens of the Hudson Bay country harbour the greater number of those that still haunt the open. In the heavy timber of the Rockies those wolves that prefer to hunt in the shadow of the forest find abundance of deer and smaller game and good hiding, that not only enables them to hold their own in numbers, but in many sections even to increase."

Whether going in packs or singly, the grey wolf rarely resorts to still-hunting and ambush as the cougar does, but runs down its prey by speed and endurance. During the summer the wolves separate into pairs, and, seeking out secluded retreats, dwell for a time in dens or burrows of their own digging, the she wolf nursing her whelps at home while her mate keeps her supplied with food. After the young wolves have learned to kill for themselves, the family joins the pack again, knowing that their success in hunting depends upon their numbers.

A full-grown wolf in exceptional instances reaches a height of 32 in., and a weight of 130 lbs. The bitch wolves are smaller; and

moreover there is often great variation even in the wolves of closely neighbouring localities.

My first visit to the backwoods of Muskoka was preceded by a trip to Cairo, Constantinople, etc. My note on the grey wolf written at this time naturally savours of the impressions of these travels.

"The grey wolf," I wrote, "is a very formidable animal, in appearance not unlike the large wild dogs of Constantinople, though more imposing and ferocious-looking. In size and weight they would compete with a bloodhound or a Newfoundland dog. The head is massive with broad nostrils; its heavy jaws are armed with rows of sharp teeth calculated to rend in pieces the toughest material. Their build denotes great strength. The tail is short, thick, and bushy, and is generally carried slightly above the level of the back. The coat is thick and coarse, though not without some attraction and beauty."

A wolf is a terrible fighter. He will decimate a pack of hounds by rapid snaps with his powerful jaws, while suffering little damage himself; nor are the ordinary big dogs, supposed to be fighting dogs, able to tackle him without special

training. President Roosevelt knew one wolf to kill a bulldog, which had rushed at it, with a single snap of his long-toothed jaws, and the admirable training in which he always gives him a great advantage over fat, small-toothed, smooth-skinned dogs, even though they are nominally supposed to belong to the fighting classes. General Wade Hampton, during his fifty years' hunting with horse and hound in Mississippi, has on several occasions tried his pack of foxhounds with a wolf. He found that it was with the greatest difficulty, however, that he could persuade them to so much as follow the trail. Usually, as soon as they came across it, they would growl, bristle up, and then retreat with their tails between their legs. Only one of his dogs ever really tried to master a wolf by itself, and this one paid for its temerity with its life; for while running a wolf in a cane-brake the beast turned and tore it in pieces. Finally, General Hampton succeeded in getting a number of his hounds to follow the trail in full cry, and thus drive the wolf out of the thicket, and give a chance to the hunter to get a shot. In this way he killed two or three.

During the past sixteen years I have crossed

and recrossed the Atlantic twenty times, and it was on one of these occasions that I made the acquaintance of a young hunter from the neighbourhood of the Caribou country, south of Hudson's Bay, who told me one of the most extraordinary stories of an escape from wolves that I have ever heard. I do not hold myself responsible in any way for its truth, but as it deeply interested me, I may be pardoned for repeating it as I wrote it down afterwards in my own words :—

“The howling of the wolves increased, and appeared to be as near to us as when we first started. It was almost dark, and our faces looked deathly pale in the uncertain light of the forest. Jack led the way with a step which never appeared to falter or tire. I could not help admiring his cool, manly self-possession. Suddenly he stopped, and, turning his head, spoke with a clear, calm voice : ‘I am afraid we shall have a hot time of it unless we can get clean away. I have travelled the bush now for twenty years, but I never heard the howling of wolves like this ; there must be hundreds of them.’

“‘Do you think they have tracked us?’ I asked, feeling very cold and shivering.

reaching me. They sounded their hideous snarls at every chink in the logs, but, as time went on, and they still remained merely scraping and tearing at the stout timbers, I began to feel a sense of safety. Once I fancied I heard a piteous, despairing shriek, and my thoughts turned to my brave pal who had saved my life. The sound seemed like the voice of a man whose last hour had come, and the death which he had to face was of an awful nature.

“Fancy often invents and deceives the highly-strung mind. It is quite possible to mistake the screech of the cougar, or wild cat, for the human voice, and the dismal creaking groans of a half-severed bough, swayed by the wind, for the painful utterances of a dying person. I tried to picture Jack safely hidden away amidst the branches of a huge oak, but in reality I had little hope for him. A man overtaken by so many wolves would have been killed, and devoured in a few moments, and, underestimating the speed of my flight, I dreaded lest the wolves, having destroyed Jack, might be hurrying after me. It was a revolting thought, and the horror of proceeding alone almost moved me to go forth into the night and perish.

"Weary, cold, and miserable, I finally huddled myself among some empty sacks, and fell asleep. It was broad daylight when I awoke, and my limbs were stiff and sore. The wolves had entirely disappeared, and as I pulled back the barriers of the door I saw Jack, pale and fainting, leaning against the side of the hut.

"At first I thought he was dead, but after I had dragged him into the shanty I perceived that he was in a half-frozen stupor. I wrapped round him every possible covering I could find, and as I lay by his side and watched, he fell into an easy sleep. My relief that he was likely to recover quickly was inexpressible. While Jack remained asleep I had leisure to examine the crude dwelling that had proved such 'a tower of refuge' to me against the wolves.

"The timbers were hewn carelessly, being squared and fitted with no other tool than the ordinary backwoodsman's axe. Mud and boughs had been rammed in the open places, though daylight was visible here and there. Standing, as a fixture in the centre, was a table supported by huge blocks. Upon this table still remained the rude appointments of a simple meal. The fat adhered to the frying-pan, and

the flesh of a fat buck remained unconsumed in the midst. An unwholesome-looking loaf was uncut, and the preparations appeared as though made for an expected guest. A large hunting-knife and steel were hanging from a nail ready for use. There were no windows, but on one side was a sliding door, used probably both for light and ventilation. This room was divided into a sleeping and feeding compartment by a curious screen composed of deer-hides and old sacking. My attention was particularly attracted to this screen. An extraordinary fascination caused me to gaze at it. Curiosity has always been attributed to women, but men also like to dabble with the mysterious.

"I gazed for some time at the simple furniture and the weird-looking screen before I decided to investigate. I had no wish to intrude upon the privacy of another, but a sickly, oppressive odour permeated the atmosphere and produced a feeling of intolerable nausea. I attributed this to the death of some unfortunate dog or cat, that had been unintentionally neglected. The idea of any person occupying the place never occurred to me.

"My hand had already seized the huge screen,

and I was about to draw it impulsively aside, when a noise suddenly arrested the act. Why was it I started and turned pale? Is there a power within that can speak? I drew rapidly from the hateful screen, and went to the door for fresh air. A faintness and loathing made me sick and giddy. While standing here a few minutes I heard a sound, and, turning round, perceived that Jack had his eyes wide open, and was yawning vigorously. My nerves were at such a tension that when he spoke I neither heard him nor replied, and it was not until his question had been several times repeated that I became conscious he was talking to me.

“Raising himself upon his elbows, and looking at me searchingly, he said: ‘What is the matter with that screen? I have been looking at it for the last five minutes. I can’t make it out; it seemed to wake me up.’

“Having now fairly recovered my self-possession, I answered Jack’s remarks with a laugh, and told him it concealed a ghost. ‘A ghost!’ said Jack, springing to his feet. ‘I have heard of ghost stories and bad smells, but this is so thick I believe one could cut slices out of the air with a knife.’

“ ‘Well ! never mind, old man,’ I replied, ‘let us have a pipe and disinfect the enemy.’ ”

“ We had our pipes and talked of everything we could think of except that screen, but I noticed my companion looking at it continually, and he too detected me a dozen times doing the same thing. Finally, we both spoke almost together. ‘What is behind it?’ ”

“ The sun had now arisen, and the warm rays fell upon the roof of the hut, and as the heat increased the odours that surrounded us became unbearable. We walked round the hut together a dozen times, and tried to peer into that mysterious recess and to unearth the mystery without the necessity of pulling aside the screen, but without success. Still we hesitated. There are horrors of death in the shape of death that the bravest shrink from, and though we had both so narrowly escaped its jaws, yet that screen, with its weird shadow, unearthly odour, and awful something hidden, made the very thought of investigation repugnant. The old-fashioned decision of tossing a coin in the air or drawing lots doubtless occurred to us both, but to carry it out was a concession to cowardice that neither would admit.

“Jack was evidently working himself up to desperation, though he could not keep his eyes off the screen. Taking me by the arm he said : ‘Come on ! let us buck up and do it.’

“We entered the hut without a word. The suffocating atmosphere appeared worse than ever, but we did not pause until, as though by mutual consent, each had grasped a portion of the screen, and given it a violent wrench. The result was both alarming and remarkable. A terrible blow struck me upon the brow, and staggering backwards I fell upon the ground. I must have been knocked insensible, for when I recovered, Jack was bending over me and wiping blood from a wound upon my head. My first words were : ‘What has happened?’ The disorder and wreck around answered the query. Our united strength had destroyed the whole structure, and a heavy pole had inflicted a severe blow as it fell.

“My friend had not escaped entirely without hurt, for he told me he had also been stunned by a mysterious blow. Men tell us that a delusion will sometimes vanish with the flowing of blood from a prick from a pin ; certain it is that my nerves were in a far more reasonable

condition after the accident than they were before.

"I therefore struggled to my feet and approached cautiously a couch half covered by the fallen screen, and, carefully lifting the corners, looked beneath.

"Oh! horror of horrors! A most dreadful sight greeted me! The face of a young woman half devoured, and in a state of terrible decomposition. The poor creature had doubtless been seized with sudden illness and staggered to her bed, where she had helplessly suffered and died. It would appear from the half-prepared meal that her attack had overtaken her while engaged in an effort to make ready for her husband's home-coming.

"Leaving this chamber of horrors we hastened to the neighbouring sheds, only to find the doors barred and locked. A few heavy blows from a hastily-procured club revealed to us a dead cow, a hog, and a few fowls. The hog had evidently been the last survivor, a half-eaten chicken, and even rents in the cow's carcase testifying to his last efforts to support life. Our position was extremely painful. The ground was frozen too hard to enable us to dig a grave. The only

alternative appeared to be to set fire to the buildings. Jack favoured this plan, because it appeared to us both that the scoundrel husband who had penetrated into this forest region had secretly entered a lumbering camp and surrendered his wife to starvation and death.

"Gathering all the dead wood we could find, we piled up huge heaps on each side, and then applied a flaming torch, and in the solemn light of that weird fire we stood with heads uncovered, until, realising that we could do no more, we collected our few belongings, and turned our backs upon this dismal scene, and soon we were lost to view in the thick canopy of the wild forest. More than once we turned our heads to look back ; but, partly from respect to the memory of that poor unknown one, we proceeded silently and sadly toward the South."

President Roosevelt relates an authentic instance of the hybridising of the wolf with the dog,* and though I have personally seen several

* In the menagerie of Mr. Wombwell there were exhibited, in October, 1828, two animals from a cross between the wolf and the domestic dog, which had been bred in this country. They were in the same den with a female setter, and were likely again to multiply the species. A similar circumstance is related by the celebrated anatomist, John Hunter, in the *Philosophical Transactions* for 1787 ; and he contends that

such hybrids, I have never been able to trace their origin.

"On a neighbouring ranch," he wrote, "there is a most ill-favoured hybrid, whose mother was a Newfoundland and whose father was a large wolf. It is stoutly built with erect ears, pointed muzzle, rather short head, short bushy tail, and of a brindled colour; funnily enough, it looks more like a hyæna than like either of its parents. It is familiar with people and a good cattle dog, but rather treacherous; it both barks and howls. The parent wolf carried on a long courtship with the Newfoundland. He came round the ranch, regularly and boldly, every night, and she would at once go out to him. In the day-

this fact establishes that the wolf and dog are the same species. He deduces the like conclusions from the same fact with regard to the dog and the jackal. In corroboration of this argument, we may add, Sir Everard Home mentions the intestines of the dog and the wolf as of similar length, while those of the fox are shorter. The length of the intestines is important with regard to the habits of the animal. In those wholly of a carnivorous nature, such as the lion, the intestinal canal is considerably shorter than in those which feed even occasionally on vegetables. That excellent magazine *Animal Life* has always opened its pages to any interesting correspondence on the subject of hybridisation, either in beasts or birds, and many photographs from life have been reproduced of various hybrids, among which may be included Mr. H. C. Brooke's wolf-dingo hybrids.

light he would lie hid in the bushes at some little distance. Once or twice his hiding-place was discovered, and then the men would amuse themselves by setting the Newfoundland on him. She would make at him with great apparent ferocity ; but when they were a good way from the men he would turn round and wait for her, and they would go romping off together, not to be seen again for several hours."

The same writer adds :—

"On the ranch next below mine there was a plucky bull terrier, weighing about 25 lbs., who lost his life owing to his bravery. On one moonlight night three wolves came round the stable and the terrier sallied out promptly. He made such a quick rush as to take his opponents by surprise, and seized one by the throat; nor did he let go till the other two tore him almost asunder across the loins.

"Better luck attended a large mongrel called a sheepdog by his master, but whose blood was apparently about equally derived from collie, Newfoundland, and bulldog. He was a sullen but very intelligent and determined brute, powerfully built, and with strong jaws, and though neither as tall nor as heavy as a wolf, he had yet killed two

of these animals single-handed. One of them had come into the farmyard at night, and had taken a young pig, whose squeals roused everybody. The wolf loped off with his booty, the dog running after and overtaking him in the darkness. The struggle was short, for the dog had seized the wolf by the throat, and the latter could not shake him off, though he made the most desperate efforts, rising on his hind-legs and pressing the dog down with his fore-paws. This time the victor escaped scathless, but in his second fight, when he strangled a still larger wolf, he was severely punished. The wolf had seized a sheep, when the dog, rushing on him, caused him to leave his quarry. Instead of running, he turned to bay at once, taking off one of his assailant's ears with a snap. The dog did not get a good hold, and the wolf scored him across the shoulders and flung him off. They then faced each other for a minute, and at the next dash the dog made good his throat-hold, and throttled the wolf, though the latter contrived to get his foe's fore-leg into his jaws and broke it clean through."

Lastly, this great hunter refers to wolves attacking men, as follows :—

"I have heard them come around camp very close, growling so savagely as to make one almost reluctant to leave the camp-fire and go into the darkness unarmed. Once I was camped in the fall near a lonely little lake in the mountains, by the edge of quite a broad stream. Soon after nightfall three or four wolves came around camp and kept me awake by their sinister and dismal howling. Two or three times they came so close to the fire that I could hear them snap their jaws and growl, and at one time I positively thought that they intended to try to get into camp, so excited were they by the smell of the fresh meat. After a while they stopped howling ; and then all was silent for an hour or so. I let the fire go out and was turning into bed when I suddenly heard some animal of considerable size come down to the stream nearly opposite to me and begin to splash across, first wading, then swimming. It was pitch dark and I could not possibly see, but I felt sure it was a wolf. However, after coming half-way over it changed its mind and swam back to the opposite bank ; nor did I see or hear anything more of the night marauders."

Though personally I have never hunted the wolf with hounds, yet I understand from those who

have often done so, that the sport is most exciting. A few concluding remarks on this subject may not be amiss. I must quote once more from *The Wilderness Hunter* (page 402).

“As I was very anxious to see a wolf-hunt, the judge volunteered to get one up, and asked old man Prindle to assist, for the sake of his two big fighting dogs. They were the only dogs anywhere around capable of tackling a savage timber wolf.

“Luck favoured us. Two wolves had killed a calf and dragged it into a long patch of dense brush where there was a little spring, the whole furnishing admirable cover for any wild beast. Early in the morning we started on horseback for this bit of cover, which was some three miles off. The party consisted of the judge, old man Prindle, a cowboy, myself, and the dogs. The judge and I carried our rifles and the cowboy his revolver, but old man Prindle had nothing but a heavy whip, for he swore with many oaths that no one should interfere with his big dogs, for by themselves they would surely ‘make the wolf feel sicker than a stuck hog.’ Our shaggy ponies racked along at a five-mile gait over the dewy prairie grass. The two big dogs trotted behind their master, grim and ferocious. The track-

hounds were tied in couples, and the beautiful greyhounds loped lightly and gracefully alongside the horses. The country was fine. A mile to our right a small river wound in long curves between banks fringed with cotton-woods. Two or three miles to our left the foothills rose sheer and bare, with clumps of black pine and cedar in their gorges. We rode over gently rolling prairie, with here and there patches of brush at the foot of the slopes around the dry watercourses.

“At last we reached a somewhat deeper valley, in which the wolves were harboured. Wolves lie close in the daytime and will not leave cover if they can help it; and as they had both food and water within, we knew it was most unlikely that the couple would have gone. The valley was a couple of hundred yards broad, and three or four times as long, filled with a growth of ash and dwarf elm and cedar, thorny underbush choking the spaces between. Posting the cowboy, to whom he gave his rifle, with two greyhounds on one side of the upper end, and old man Prindle with two others on the opposite side, while I was left at the lower end to guard against the possibility of the wolves breaking

back, the judge himself rode into the thicket near me and loosened the track-hounds to let them find the wolves' trail. The big dogs also were uncoupled and allowed to go in with the hounds. Their power of scent was very poor, but they were sure to be guided aright by the baying of the hounds, and their presence would give confidence to the latter and make them ready to rout the wolves out of the thicket, which they would probably have shrunk from doing alone.

"There was a moment's pause of expectation after the judge entered the thicket with the hounds. We sat motionless on our horses, eagerly looking through the keen fresh morning air. Then a clamorous baying from the thicket in which both horseman and dogs had disappeared showed that the hounds had struck the trail of their quarry and we were running on a hot scent. For a couple of minutes we could not be quite certain which side the game was going to break. The hounds ran zigzag through the bush, as we could tell by their baying, and once some yelping and a great row showed that they had come closer than they had expected upon at least one of the wolves.

"In another minute, however, the wolves found it too hot for them and bolted from the thicket. My first notice of this was seeing the cowboy, who was standing by the side of his horse, suddenly throw up his rifle and fire, while the greyhounds, who had been springing high in the air half maddened by the clamour in the thicket below, for a moment dashed off the wrong way, confused by the report of the gun. I rode for all I was worth to where the cowboy stood, and instantly caught a glimpse of two wolves, grizzled-grey and brown, which having been turned by his shot had started straight over the hill across the plain towards the mountains three miles away. As soon as I saw them I saw also that the rearmost of the couple had been hit somewhere in the body and was lagging behind, the blood running from its flanks, while the two greyhounds were racing after it; and at the same moment the track-hounds and the big dogs burst out of the thicket yelling savagely as they struck the bloody trail. The wolf was hard hit and staggered as he ran. He did not have 100 yards start of the dogs, and in less than a minute one of the greyhounds ranged up and passed him with a savage snap that

brought him to ; and before he could recover the whole pack rushed at him. Weakened as he was, he could make no effective fight against so many foes, and indeed, had a chance for but one or two rapid snaps before he was thrown down and completely covered by the bodies of his enemies. Yet with one of those snaps he did damage, as a shrill yell told, and in a second an over-rash track-hound came out of the struggle with a deep gash across his shoulders. The worrying, growling, and snarling were terrific, but in a minute the heaving mass grew motionless, and the dogs drew off, save one or two that still continued to worry the dead wolf as it lay stark and stiff with glazed eyes and rumpled fur.

“No sooner were we satisfied that it was dead than the judge, with cheers and oaths and crackings of the whip, urged the dogs after the other wolf. The two greyhounds that had been with old man Prindle had fortunately not been able to see the wolves when they first broke from the cover, and never saw the wounded wolf at all, starting off at full speed after the unwounded one the instant he topped the crest of the hill. He had taken advantage of a slight hollow and

turned, and now the chase was crossing us half a mile away. With whip and spur we flew towards them, our two greyhounds stretching out in front and leaving us as if we were standing still, the track-hounds and big dogs running after them just ahead of the horses. Fortunately the wolf plunged for a moment into a little brushy hollow and again doubled back, and this gave us a chance to see the end of the chase near by. The two greyhounds which had first taken up the pursuit were then but a short distance behind. Nearer they crept, until they were within ten yards, and then with a tremendous race the little bitch ran past him and inflicted a vicious bite in the big beast's ham. He whirled round like a top and his jaws clashed like those of a sprung bear-trap, but, quick though he was, she was quicker and just cleared his savage rush. In another moment he resumed his flight at full speed, a speed which only that of the greyhounds exceeded : but almost immediately the second greyhound ranged alongside, and though he was not able to bite, because the wolf kept running with its head turned around threatening him, yet by his feints he delayed the beast's flight so that in a moment or two

the remaining couple of swift hounds arrived on the scene. For a moment the wolf and all four dogs galloped along in a bunch ; then one of the greyhounds, watching his chance, pinned the beast cleverly by the hock and threw him completely over. The others jumped on it in an instant ; but rising by main force the wolf shook himself free, catching one dog by the ear and tearing it half off. Then he sat down on his haunches, and the greyhounds ranged themselves around him some twenty yards off, forming a ring which forbade his retreat, though they themselves did not dare touch him. However, the end was at hand. In another moment the big dogs came running up at headlong speed, and smashed into the wolf like a couple of battering-rams. He rose on his hind-legs like a wrestler as they came at him, the greyhounds also rising and bouncing up and down like rubber balls. I could just see the wolf and the big dog locked together, as the second made good his throat-hold. In another moment over all three tumbled, while the greyhounds and one or two of the track-hounds jumped in to take part in the killing. The big dogs more than occupied the wolf's attention and took all the punishing, while

in a trice one of the greyhounds, having seized him by the hind-leg, stretched him out, and the others were biting his undefended belly. The snarling and yelling of the worry made a noise so fiendish that it was fairly blood-curdling ; then it gradually died away, and the second wolf lay limp on the plain."

One of the most famous packs in the West was that of the Sun River Hound Club, in Montana, started by the stockmen of Sun River to get rid of the curse of wolves, which infested the neighbourhood, and worked very serious damage to the flocks and herds. The pack was composed of both greyhounds and deerhounds, the best being from the kennels of Colonel Williams and of Mr. Van Hummel, of Denver ; they were handled by an old plainsman and veteran wolf-hunter, named Porter. In the season of 1886 the astonishing number of 146 wolves was killed with these dogs. Ordinarily, as soon as the dogs seized a wolf, and threw or held it, Porter rushed in and stabbed it with his hunting-knife ; one day, when out with six hounds, he thus killed no less than twelve out of the fifteen wolves started, though one of the greyhounds was killed and

all the rest cut and exhausted. But often the wolves were killed without his aid.

A large wolf had killed and partially eaten a sheep in a corral close to the ranch house, and Porter started on the trail, and followed him at a jog-trot nearly ten miles before the hounds spotted him. Running but a few rods, he turned viciously to bay, and the two greyhounds struck him like stones hurled from a catapult, throwing him as they fastened on his throat ; they held him down and strangled him before he could rise, two other hounds getting up just in time to help at the end of the worry.



"A LARGE, FLAT, HIDEOUS FACE WITH GLARING EYES."

[See p. 195.]

VI

THE WILD CAT, OR LYNX, OF MUSKOKA

Felis canadensis

THE wild cat is a name applied by the inhabitants of Muskoka to every wild animal of a prowling, uncertain type that may be heard discordantly at night.

The cougar (*Felis concolor*), the red lynx (*Felis rufa*), and the Canadian lynx (*Felis canadensis*) have all been seen and shot from time to time, according to local authority, in the Muskoka district. The cry of these savage denizens of the forest is very startling, and to one unversed in zoological nomenclature confusion and mistakes can be pardoned. The wolverene (*Gulo luscus*) has been shot in New York State, Maine, and Canada, and though it is more plentiful within the Arctic Circle, specimens have been seen and procured in this

neighbourhood. It is therefore possible, from the similarity of habits, the density of the bush, and the brief opportunity for observation, for a hunter to return home with some extraordinary story about the ferocity or timidity of the wild cat, when in reality no such creature was within fifty miles.

The wild cat not only makes havoc among the chickens, turkeys, and ducks of the settler, but destroys many of the smaller quadrupeds, as well as partridges, and such other birds as he can surprise roosting on the ground. He is sometimes hunted in the South with packs of hounds. When hard pressed by the dogs, he ascends a tree with great agility, and should he be dislodged from his perch he will fight fiercely with the pack until killed.

An old trapper, during a long conversation, informed me that he knew of only one wild animal that he had reason to fear—"an animal," he said, "which feared neither man nor the devil."

When I pressed him for an explanation, he informed me that it was the wild cat. He had known the wild cat to be concealed upon an overhanging bough and drop down upon any unsuspecting creature beneath, whether man or

beast. When once it seized its victim it would feed upon the living flesh until hunger was satisfied, leaving the poor sufferer to die at leisure. He further showed me large scars upon his shoulder as a proof of his statement. This libel on the wild cat seems to be almost the rule rather than the exception in Muskoka.

Audubon and Bachman write as follows :—

“The general appearance of this species conveys the idea of a degree of ferocity which cannot with propriety be considered as belonging to its character, although it will, when at bay, show its sharp teeth, and with outstretched claws and infuriated despair, repel the attacks of either man or dog, sputtering the while and rolling its eyes like the common cat.

“It is, however, generally cowardly when attacked, and always flies from its pursuers, if it can ; and although some anecdotes have been related to us of the daring, strength, and fierceness of this animal, such as its having been known to kill at different times a sheep, a full-grown doe, attack a child in the woods, etc., yet in all the instances that have come under our notice we have found it very timid, and always rather inclined to beat a retreat than to make an attack

on any animal larger than a hare or a young pig."

A story is told of a battle between an eagle and a wild cat. After a fierce struggle, in which the eagle was so badly wounded that it could not fly, the cat, scratched and pierced in many places, and having had an eye entirely "gouged out" in the combat, was found lying dead.

The only animal answering the description of wild cat mentioned by the trapper is the jaguar. Texas and east of the Mississippi are the farthest points in North America where this fierce brute has been shot. This savage beast does indeed exhibit the characteristics referred to. It will remain for hours crouched down, with head depressed, and still as death. But when some luckless animal approaches its eyes seem to dilate, its hair bristles up, its tail is gently waved backwards and forwards, and all its powerful limbs appear to quiver with excitement. The unsuspecting creature draws near ; suddenly, with a tremendous leap, the jaguar pounces on it, and with the fury of an incarnate fiend fastens upon the neck with its terrible teeth, whilst its formidable claws are struck deep into the back and flanks. The poor victim writhes and plunges

with fright and pain, and makes violent efforts to shake off the foe. The jaguar begins to devour it while yet alive, and growls and roars over its prey until hunger is appeased. The jaguar is incorrectly called the wild cat in the Southern State of Texas.

The cougar is generally known by the name of panther, or painter. His courage is not great, and unless very hungry, or when wounded and at bay, he seldom attacks man. The cougar is not plentiful in Muskoka, and only once did I have an exciting adventure with one.

This was in the early part of December (1889), when I chanced to be driving from Utterson to Port Carling. The snow had fallen and frozen hard, and the sleighing was decidedly good. The journey was pleasant, and my Indian ponies drew me swiftly over the smooth surface. I had passed the small clearing of George Mahon and was nearing Port Carling when suddenly I became aware of some large cat-like animal bounding towards me from a sloping bank on the left. The moon was shining at the full, and as I looked at this curious creature I became alarmed to note that, though I was driving very fast, the wonderful bounds of the wild cat made it appear as though

the sleigh was at a standstill. At first I thought it was a large bloodhound, and got ready my long whip; scarcely had I done so when the brute sprang at me from the back of the sleigh. The horses gave a start and plunge at the same instant, and the cat, missing its mark, fell heavily in the snow.

The close view obtained decided me that it was a young cougar escaped from some show. Fortunately my large frontier revolver lay under the seat, and in an instant I had fired twice at my pursuer. The cougar did not appear to heed me, however, but hurried on again, this time springing upon my buffalo-robe. Turning round quickly I discharged my weapon in its face, and the brute reluctantly relaxed its hold and slipped off. For half a minute I watched it as it lay there apparently dead, and then hastened on to procure help to bring the body back. My horses needed no urging, and soon they were travelling at a furious pace with the white foam flying from their mouths, and the crisp, frozen snow rising like diamonds from the iron runners. I still held my revolver in one hand and the reins in the other. Continually I gazed back for signs of pursuit. The

cougar must have been stunned, for soon it appeared approaching me rapidly with extraordinary bounds, covering the ground at a rate that seemed to me miraculous. We were passing along the road to Port Carling where it widens sufficiently to permit two or three vehicles to pass, and the moon shining down upon this broad white pathway enabled me to procure a splendid line of fire. I patiently waited until the brute had nerved itself for another spring, and then discharged my weapon once more. This time my aim was successful, and as I paused on the road I perceived the cougar struggling blindly and tearing up the snow with its sharp claws—then, as though satisfied the fight was over, it crawled away miserably into the thick bush as if its back was broken, uttering the most horrible moans I have ever heard. Satisfied that I should trace the creature by the blood-stains on the following day, I hurried on.

Next morning I proceeded at an early hour to the spot. There was a large patch of crimson stain upon the snow, and blood-marks led me to a swamp. I followed the trail for miles until finally I lost it among some huge boulders of rock.

Andubon mentions a case which may be compared with my own adventure.

"A settler on the Yazoo River was riding home alone one night through the woods, when a cougar sprang at him from a fallen log, but owing to his horse making a sudden plunge, only struck the rump of his steed with one paw, and could not maintain his hold. The man was for a moment unable to account for the furious start his horse had made, but presently, turning his head, saw the cougar behind, and putting his spurs to his horse, galloped away. On examining the horse, wounds were observed on his rump corresponding with the claws of the cougar's paw, and from their distance apart, the foot must have been spread widely when he struck the animal."

The cougar is quite abundant in Florida, where it is known both as the panther and wild cat. Ignorance or want of inventive power manifested by America's early colonists caused them to name every quadruped, bird, and fish after species belonging to the Old World, without the slightest regard to resemblance, and generally with a total disregard to propriety. The cougar is as little like the panther as an opossum

is like the kangaroo! For a long time the cougar was thought to be a lion; the lioness having something the same colour, and but little mane. I have often heard this beast described as an American lion.

During the winter of 1890 and 1891 I spent some time at the Indian River Hotel and also at Lake Worth. On two occasions I saw the cougar. The first time I disturbed him finishing a meal of racoon, and when he saw me he bounded away in such confusion and terror that his gestures were absolutely ridiculous. My second adventure was about five miles south of the hotel, near some swampy land where I was on the watch for an alligator. This brute must have been a male and of a different metal. He did not show fight, but sulkily sneaked off. I had only a shot-gun, and remembering my experience in Muskoka I decided I would not fire unless at a dozen yards. I therefore followed the cougar for some miles. He never changed his gait unless I hit him with a stone, then he would rush away for some forty or fifty yards and stop, turning his fierce face toward me. The country he led me through abounded with rattlesnakes, and after treading accidentally upon one and feeling his slimy head

touch my hand, I felt the warning was sufficient and returned back cougarless. Afterwards I was informed my adventure might have ended fatally, because the cougar rarely wanders far from his mate, and the two would undoubtedly have attacked me.

The dens of this species are generally near the mouth of some cave in the rocks, where the animal's lair is just far enough inside to be out of the rain ; and not in this respect like the dens of the bear, which are sometimes ten or twelve yards from the opening of a large crack or fissure in the rocks. In the Southern States, where there are no caves or rocks, the lair of the cougar is generally in a dense thicket or in a cane-brake. It is a rude sort of bed of sticks, weeds, leaves, and grasses or mosses, and where the canes arch over it, as they are evergreen, their long pointed leaves turn the rain at all seasons of the year.

The cougar measures about five feet long from the point of its nose to the root of the tail. The cry of this animal in the forest during the mating season is startling and remarkable. My attention was drawn to such cries proceeding from a belt of thick wood on the opposite shore of Lake Muskoka, while I was residing at Fairmont.

The sounds were most blood-curdling, and the settlers' children were afraid to pass near the spot. The cries may not have been those of a cougar, though personally I am sure they were. The screams of the great horned owl, very abundant in Muskoka, are sometimes mistaken for the cries of this animal.

The lynx, or wild cat, of Muskoka would still remain a mystery to me, had I not once discovered *Felis canadensis* peering at me from the shelter of a thick bough. I was travelling north-east of Lake Rosseau in the direction of Fairy Lake. I had ridden about ten miles from Rosseau village, when my attention was drawn to some partridges (tree-grouse) feeding on the path some fifty yards ahead. I quickly dismounted, and hitching my horse to a low bough, walked rapidly towards them, taking the cover of the thick bush to enable me to get a good shot. Suddenly there arose a whirr almost at my feet, and a covey of twenty birds flew away. Marking the spot where they settled, I soon arrived in their neighbourhood, and commenced a diligent search. While thus engaged, I chanced to see a large, flat, hideous face with glaring eyes, looking down upon me. I fired, and hit the

creature in the head. It was a lynx, or wild cat (*Felis canadensis*), and with a wonderful bound it sprang from the bough, tearing up the ground where it fell, and hurling itself from side to side as it uttered horrible yells and moans. The infuriated brute looked so terrible, that I dropped my gun in my efforts to get out of the way. I do not suggest that this wild cat had any intention of attacking me, but his movements were all in that direction, whether from anger or blindness I cannot say. A more ferocious, dangerous-looking creature I have never seen. Its long, curved, acuminate claws were struck out viciously, and so near to me that I deemed it wisdom to beat an ignominious retreat and mount my horse. For a long distance I could hear the fiendish yells of the cat, notwithstanding the fact that my horse galloped over hard stones and rocks and made a considerable clatter with his hoofs. On another occasion, I was riding one night from Mattawa to Pettewana, when I became conscious of two wild cats following me over the fallen logs and rough wood on the side of the road. I imagine they were male and female. Their movements and gambols were very graceful, and I drew aside to watch them with

pleasure and interest. They were either ignorant of my presence or ignored it, and having no firearms I left them unmolested.

The food of the lynx consists of several species of birds, the northern hare, chipping squirrel, etc., and such small animals as he can steal from the farm. I have heard it stated that the lynx has been known to attack and kill a deer, though personally I doubt this. Hearne states that he "once saw one which had seized on the carcass of a deer just killed by an Indian, who was forced to shoot it before it would relinquish the prize." Small fawns, lambs, and pigs are frequently carried off by this animal.

I have never seen the red lynx (*Felis rufa*), also called wild cat, in Muskoka, though in 1890 I shot one near Palatka, Florida. This animal goes by the name of the common American wild cat, and it is much smaller than *Felis canadensis*. Its fur is beautifully marked with longitudinal stripes on the back. Specimens have been obtained in Canada, but I have no reliable data to justify me in adding this species to the confused total of wild cats of Muskoka.

The conclusion of this chapter may not be an inappropriate place to add a few words upon the

wolverene, or glutton (*Gulo luscus*), and I cannot do better than begin by quoting what Audubon describes as the errors and superstitions of Buffon in relation to the wolverene. Writing of this animal (vol. vii., p. 277), he says :—

“ The defect of nimbleness he supplies with cunning : he lies in wait for animals as they pass ; he climbs upon trees in order to dart upon his prey and seize it with advantage ; he throws himself down upon elks and reindeer, and fixes so firmly on their bodies with his claws and teeth that nothing can remove him. In vain do the poor victims fly and rub themselves against trees ; the enemy, attached to the crupper, or neck, continues to suck their blood, to enlarge the wound, and to devour them gradually with equal voracity, till they fall down.

“ More insatiable and rapacious than the wolf, if endowed with equal agility, the wolverene, or glutton, would destroy all the other animals ; but he moves so heavily that the only animal he is able to overtake is the beaver, whose cabins he sometimes attacks and devours the whole, unless they quickly take to the water, for the beaver outstrips him in swimming. When he perceives that his prey has escaped, he seizes the fishes ; and

when he can find no living creature to destroy, he goes in quest of the dead, whom he digs up from their graves, and devours with avidity."

Buffon subsequently remarked, after he had received a living wolverene, and preserved it for more than eighteen months at Paris : "He was so tame that I discovered no ferocity, and he did not injure any person. His voracity has been as much exaggerated as his cruelty : he indeed ate a good deal, but when deprived of food he was not importunate.

"The animal is pretty mild : he avoids water, and dreads horses and men dressed in black. He moves by a kind of leap, and eats pretty voraciously. After taking a full meal he covers himself in the cage with straw. When drinking he laps like a dog. He utters no cry. He is always in perpetual motion. If allowed, he would devour more than 4 lbs. of meat in a day."

Audubon observes, in writing about the wolverene : "That it seizes on deer or large game by pouncing on them, is incredible ; it neither possesses the strength nor the agility. This habit has been ascribed to the Canada lynx, as well as to the Bay lynx ; we do not think it applies to either."

"The Canada lynx," says Stone, "is the real lynx of all the North, that mysterious creature which the ancients believed possessed the power of seeing through all substances, whether opaque or not to other eyes.

"The Canada lynx is a savage, flat-faced beast, with enormous legs and paws out of all proportion to the size of its body, and absurd tail. Its soft fur of clouded grey is so blended with various shades of pale buff and tawny as to be extremely difficult to distinguish in any light or against almost any background: even in the cruel publicity of a barred cage, it is still indistinct, and one might well fancy the cage empty at a little distance. They hold on to life grimly through long cold nights in the Northern forests, believing somehow that at last spring will be in the woods again, bringing flight-birds from the South, and awakening the small creatures that sleep all the winter down deep in the frozen earth where the most desperate lynx can never reach them. Until then, the lynxes must hunt as best they can, tireless, and in splendid health, and quite unconscious of the cold, but oh, so hungry!

"In the Northern woods the lynx travels with

silent leaps, his broad paws supporting him on the snow, or alighting without a sound among brittle twigs, or dry leaves of a past summer, enabling him to pounce on grouse or hare before they have time to take alarm." (*American Animals*, 1903.)

Big Game Hunting contains the following:—

"The wild cat is often followed on horseback, with a pack of hounds, when the country is favourable. They often maul an inexperienced pack quite badly, inflicting severe scratches and bites on any hound which has just resolution enough to come to close quarters, but not to rush in furiously; but big fighting dogs will readily kill them. At Thompson's Falls, two of Willis's hounds killed a wild cat unaided, though one got torn. Archibald Rogers' dog Sly, a cross between a greyhound and a bull-mastiff, killed a bob-cat single-handed. He bayed the cat, and then began to threaten it, leaping from side to side; suddenly he broke the motion, and rushing in, got his foe by the small of the back, and killed it without receiving a scatch."

"Bears, wolves, and lynxes still occasionally attack human beings, and very likely get away without being shot at in many instances. There

are plenty of dauntless hunters and dead shots in all parts of the world, but they are in the minority." (*American Animals*, p. 290.)

Though I am still doubtful as to the designation of the wild cat of Muskoka which followed my sleigh during the winter of 1889, yet the above quotations, from unquestionable authorities, describe the leaps and bounds identically with my own observations, and the fact that the Canadian lynx is driven desperate from hunger, may have led him to follow my small ponies in the same manner as he has been known to attack a deer.

The loup cervier (*Felis canadensis*) is a shy, roving animal that, though by no means scarce, is seldom seen by the hunter. Its chief food is the American hare, but it also eats grouse, beaver, musquash—anything, in fact, it can catch. "I do not believe," says Rowan, "the anecdotes that one hears sometimes of their attacking men, the following, for instance. It seems that near a certain settlement, a man was walking home at night from the forge, with a set of horse-shoes in his hands. His path lay through the woods. A loup cervier jumped off the branch of a tree on to his neck. The man drove the

beast off with repeated blows of the horse-shoes, but his face was a good deal spoiled."

The method of trapping the Canada lynx is often with a small bough cage having a bait tied to a stake at one end, and at the other an open doorway, across which two slanting pieces of stick crossing at the centre are stuck into the ground to form a doorstep. Inside these a steel trap is set carefully concealed, or when the trapper has no steel traps, a cord noose is set in the doorway made fast to the end of a stout spring pole. The best season to trap wild cat is in the month of March, when the males are running after the females. The trapper perfumes his traps with the musk of the musquash, or else, better still, with the oil-bag of the beaver.

The inference that the wild cat of Muskoka may have been a cougar (called also puma, mountain lion, panther, painter) is supported by the testimony of the late Dr. Robb, Professor of Natural History in the University of New Brunswick. Dr. Robb has recorded an instance of a large feline animal having attacked and nearly killed a man near the capital of the province, and he further mentions having seen the skin of a puma from the vicinity of Quebec.

Scribner's Magazine once contained the following notes on the cougar :—

“Fables aside, the cougar is a very interesting creature. It is found from the cold, desolate plains of Patagonia to north of the Canadian line, and lives alike among the snow-clad peaks of the Andes and in the steaming forests of the Amazon. Doubtless careful investigation will disclose several varying forms in an animal found over such immense tracts of country and living under such utterly diverse conditions. But in all its essential habits and traits the big, slinking, nearly unicoloured cat seems to be much the same everywhere, whether living in the mountain, open plain, or forest, under Arctic cold or tropic heat. When the settlements become thick it retires to dense forests, dark swamps, or inaccessible mountain gorge, and moves about only at night. In wilder regions it not unfrequently roams during the day and ventures freely into the open. Deer are its customary prey where they are plentiful, bucks, does, and fawns being killed indifferently. Usually the deer is killed almost instantly, but occasionally there is quite a scuffle, in which the cougar may get bruised, though, as far as I know, never

seriously. It is also a dreaded enemy of sheep, pigs, calves, and especially colts, and when pressed by hunger a big male will kill a full-grown horse or cow, moose or wapiti. It is the special enemy of the mountain sheep. In 1886," says the writer, "while hunting wild goats north of Clarke's fork of the Columba, in a region where cougar were common, I found them preying as freely on goats as on deer. It rarely catches antelopes, but is quick to seize rabbits, and other small beasts, and even porcupines.

"No animal, not even a wolf, is so rarely seen or so difficult to get without dogs. On the other hand, no other beast of its size and power is so easy to kill by the aid of dogs. There are many contradictions in its character. Like the American wolf, it is certainly very much afraid of man; yet it habitually follows the trail of the hunter or solitary traveller, dogging his footsteps, itself always unseen. When hungry, it will seize and carry off any dog, yet it will sometimes go up a tree when pursued even by a single small dog wholly unable to do it the least harm. It is small wonder that the average frontier settler should grow to regard almost with superstition the great furtive cat which he never sees, but

of whose presence he is ever aware. The cougar is as large, as powerful, and as formidably armed as the Indian panther, and quite as well able to attack a man: yet the instances of its having done so are exceedingly rare. But it is foolish to deny that such attacks on human beings never occur . . . It cannot be too often repeated that we must never lose sight of the individual variation in character and conduct among wild beasts."

Referring to the cry of the cougar, Mr. Roosevelt states: "One night, while camped in a heavily timbered coulie near Kildeer Mountains, where, as their footprints showed, the beasts were plentiful, I twice heard a loud, wailing scream ringing through the impenetrable gloom which shrouded the hills around us. My companion, an old plainsman, said that this was the cry of the cougar prowling for its prey. Certainly no man could well listen to a stranger or wilder sound."

This loud, wailing scream corresponds with the cries I heard in Muskoka. Mr. Roosevelt refers also to the noiseless step of the cougar:—

"I was with a pack train in the Rockies, and one day, feeling lazy, and as we had no meat in camp,

I determined to try for deer by lying in wait beside a recently travelled game trail. The spot I chose was a steep, pine-clad slope leading down to a little mountain lake. I hid behind a breast-work of rotten logs, with a few evergreens in front—an excellent ambush. A broad game-trail slanted down the hill directly past me. I lay perfectly quiet for about an hour, listening to the murmur of the pine forests, and the occasional call of a jay or woodpecker, and gazing eagerly along the trail in the waning light of the late afternoon. Suddenly, without noise or warning of any kind, a cougar stood in the trail before me. The unlooked-for and unheralded approach of the beast was fairly ghost-like. With its head lower than its shoulders, and its tail twitching, it slouched down the path, treading as softly as a kitten. I waited until it had passed, and then fired into the short ribs, the bullet ranging forward. Throwing its tail up in the air, and giving a bound, the cougar galloped off over a slight ridge. But it did not go far: within a hundred yards I found it stretched on its side, its jaws still working convulsively."

After studying a dozen writers on the subject, I think I may venture to record the following

instances of men being killed by the cougar. General Hampton, who was a personal friend of a relative of mine, related that near his Mississippi plantation, many years ago, a negro who was one of a gang employed in building a railroad through low and wet ground was waylaid and killed by a cougar late one night as he was walking alone through the swamp.

In 1886 a cougar killed an Indian near Flathead Lake. Two Indians were hunting together on horseback when they came on the cougar. It fell at once to their shots, and they dismounted and ran towards it. Just as they reached it, it came-to, and seized one, killing him instantly with a couple of savage bites in the throat and chest ; it then raced after the other, and as he sprang on his horse, struck him against the buttocks, inflicting a deep but not dangerous scratch.

President Roosevelt knew two men in Missoula who were once attacked by cougars in a very curious manner. It was in January, and they were walking home through the snow after a hunt, each carrying on his back the saddle, haunches, and hide of a deer they had slain. Just at dusk, as they were passing through a narrow

ravine, the man in front heard his partner utter a sudden loud call for help. Turning, he was dumbfounded to see the man lying on his face in the snow, with a cougar which had evidently just knocked him down standing over him, grasping the deer-meat, while another cougar was galloping up to assist. Swinging his rifle round he shot the first one in the brain, and it dropped motionless, whereat the second halted, wheeled, and bounded into the woods. His companion was not in the least hurt or even frightened, though greatly amazed. The cougars were not full grown, but young of the year.

"Now in this case," says Mr. Roosevelt, "I do not believe the beasts had any real intention of attacking the men. They were young animals, bold, stupid, and very hungry. The smell of the raw meat excited them beyond control, and they probably could not make out clearly what the men were as they walked bent under their burdens, with the deerskins on their backs. Evidently the cougars were only trying to get at the venison."

VII

"THE PARTRIDGES" OF MUSKOKA

"THE partridge" is the erroneous name given by Canadians to the ruffed grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*), and spruce partridge the designation of the spotted or Canada grouse (*Canachites canadensis*). I have never heard them described in any other way by the Muskoka people.

The New World is wealthy in game birds, and it appears to me to be strange that no effort has been made to introduce some of them into Great Britain. I have shot the beautiful American partridge (*Colinus virginianus*) in Maryland, the prairie hen or plumated grouse (*Tympanuchus americanus*) in South-Eastern Illinois, turkeys and quail North-West of the Mississippi. The ruffed and Canada grouse are the only species of game birds I have shot in considerable numbers in Muskoka. Occasionally in the more settled parts of the

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district, far removed from Crane and Blackstone Lakes, quail are found, but these birds are probably stragglers. The forest growth is unsuitable to the quail. Last year there was a dispute among American sportsmen as to whether *Colinus virginianus* was a partridge or a quail. The majority decided it was a partridge. As a matter of fact it is neither.

The flight of the ruffed grouse is straightforward, rather low, unless when the bird has been disturbed, and seldom exceeds a few hundred yards. When it rises from the ground on being pursued by a dog or startled by a hunter, it produces a loud, whirring sound. This whirring sound is never heard when the grouse rises of its own accord, for the purpose of moving from one place to another.

The ruffed grouse spends a large portion of its time on the ground, where its motions are peculiarly graceful. It walks with an elevated firm step, opening its beautiful tail gently and with a well-marked jet, holding erect its head, the features of which are frequently raised, as are the velvety tufts of its neck. It poises its body on one foot for several seconds at a time, and utters a soft cluck. Should the bird discover

that it is observed, its step immediately changes to a rapid run, its head is lowered, the tail is more widely spread, and if no convenient hiding-place is at hand, it immediately takes flight with as much of the whirring sound as it can produce. Should, however, the grouse run into a thicket, or even over a place where many dried leaves lie on the ground, it suddenly squats, and remains close until the danger is over, or until it is forced by a dog or a sportsman to rise against its wish. Sometimes, when these birds are found on the sides of a steep hill, the moment they start, they dive towards the foot of the declivity, take a turn, and fly off in a direction so different from the one expected that unless the sportsman is aware of the trick, he may not see them again that day. The young birds too often prove equally difficult to be obtained, for as they are raised from amongst the closely tangled laurels they only fly a few yards, and again drop among them. A smart little spaniel proves the best for ruffed grouse ; for no sooner does he flush a covey than they all fly up into a neighbouring tree, where with fluttering wings and outspread tail they look down upon the intruder.

On one occasion, in Alice Township, I secured

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eight birds of a covey by shooting the bird perched upon the lowest bough. I believe the whole covey has been bagged in this way—in spite of Mr. Audubon's experience to the contrary. The grouse appear to fear a dog more than a man, and in every instance of my own knowledge, nothing but a bird falling from overhead, on the removal of the dog to another tree, has caused their escape.

In the breeding season the cocks select some fallen tree, and strutting up and down beat with their wings, making a muffled drumming sound that can be heard for half a mile. The beat is at irregular intervals, beginning slowly and measuredly, and gradually increasing in quickness, until it ends in a roll. If the bird happens to find a dry well-placed log, his tattoo of welcome can be heard a mile, and is one of the pleasantest of woodland sounds. It has the same accelerated paces and is about the same duration as the call of the racoon, and is only heard in the daytime, as the racoon's is only heard at night. Usually the same cock continues to use the same log, but he will sound his call from any other place as well. Audubon writes :—

“Early in April the ruffed grouse begins to

drum immediately after dawn, and again towards the close of day. As the season advances, the drumming is repeated more frequently at all hours of the day, and where these birds are abundant this curious sound is heard from all parts of the woods in which they reside. The male bird, standing erect on a prostrate decayed trunk, raises the feathers of its body, in the manner of a turkey-cock, draws its head towards its tail, erecting the feathers of the latter at the same time, and raising its ruff around the neck, suffers its wings to droop and struts about on the log. A few minutes elapse, when the bird draws the whole of its feathers close to its body, and stretching itself out, beats its sides with its wings in the manner of the domestic cock, but more loudly, and with such rapidity of motion, after a few strokes, as to cause a tremor in the air not unlike the rumbling of distant thunder. In perfectly calm weather it may be heard at the distance of two hundred yards."

The female, which never drums, flies directly to the place where the male is thus engaged, and, on approaching him, opens her wings, balances her body to the right and left, and then receives his caresses.

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About the beginning of May the female retires to a thicket in a close part of the woods, or more usually forms her nest at the base of a tree on the ground, and sometimes against a fallen log. It is composed of dead leaves with a few feathers, and is either very shallow or fully 5 in. deep inside. From eight to fourteen, and rarely sixteen, eggs are laid ; they are creamy white, often much stained, and sometimes speckled with brown. The young leave the nest as soon as they are hatched, and after a few days are able to fly.

When the old bird is driven from her nest, she starts off with one or both wings, or perhaps a leg apparently broken, and after scrambling on the ground a few yards scales along about 100 ft. and then takes flight. If she is found with a brood of chicks she acts in a most remarkable way, either attacking the disturber or else feigning complete powerlessness, thus diverting attention long enough to enable the young to hide.

In partridge or grouse shooting I should recommend a visit to all the islands of the lakes first. I have shot more birds in an hour on an island than I have bagged after a ten-mile tramp. It would be useless, of course, to

land upon a place where the trees were scanty or where the island covered less than an acre. Birds are sure to be found in deep gulleys, swamps, and ravines. If the weather has been wet and boisterous, look to the high ground for birds ; if, on the contrary, it has been dry and clear, the birds will be on the move at a very early hour ; if wet and cold they are loath to stir. Woodcock frequent moist places, and are seldom met with elsewhere, therefore the sportsman should be on the alert for these birds even when stalking grouse. The general rule is to shoot anything that appears certain, no matter what your original ambition may be. The forest is so dense that one is never sure of his quarry. The ruffed grouse feed on beech-nuts and berries, particularly the tea-berry ; it is hardly likely, therefore, to find these birds in neighbourhoods where there is no such food.

“ A few words,” writes Rowan, “ about the regular ‘partridge gunner’ of the country may not be amiss. There is one in every back settlement, sometimes in every house, a tall, powerful, long-haired young fellow, in a red shirt, and homespun continuations tucked inside his boots. His accoutrement consists of a long

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single barrel, a cow-horn full of powder, and a bag of shot. He is also the proud owner of a 'partridge dog,' which ranges the woods in an independent way, scorning either call or whistle, now close to its master's heels, now a mile off in the bush. But this matters not, for the beast knows his business : mutely he hunts every likely-looking spot, treating hares, squirrels, etc., with contempt ; perseveringly he puzzles over cold scent, till at length it grows hot, and he runs right into the middle of a covey. With a great whirr and rustling, they 'tree' all around him. Now is the time that calls forth the good qualities of the 'partridge dog.' Finding birds is nothing, any dog with a nose can do that ; but the thing is to show them to his master, who is perhaps half a mile off. Does he point or set ? No ! he sits down calmly on his tail, and fixing his eye on the 'treed' birds, he commences to bark and yell and howl with all his might, and never ceases nor stirs from the spot until his master comes up. Be it long or short, five minutes or five hours, there he remains, making all the noise he can. When our sportsman arrives he takes careful and deadly aim at the nearest bird, and seldom fails to lay it low. Rushing in,

he secures his game, if possible, before his faithful cur gets his tooth into it. It might reasonably be supposed that the remainder of the covey would take warning by the sad fate of their comrade and disappear ; but this is not the case, for, charmed by the yelping of the dog, they remain chained to their perches till the single barrel has been again and again loaded and fired."

It must not be supposed that partridges are easy to kill. A good dog is essential and is hard to get. The birds are exactly the same colour as the branches, and sit so close that it is difficult to make them out. The walking through the bush is very tough, and one requires to keep a sharp look-out and considerable practice to see the birds when they "tree."

The spruce-partridge frequents the spruce woods. Some consider it a handsomer bird than the other but inferior eating. These birds always "tree," and sit so close that men have been known to noose them with a piece of string at the end of a stick. I was once out with an old Indian and his son, and finding a covey of these birds in a place where stones were scarce he set the old man to cut boomerangs with his axe.

This he did almost as fast as the son and I could throw them, and the partridges remained stolidly on their perches till two of their number had been brought down by these primitive weapons. Their favourite haunts are in swamp-land, and along the banks of lakes and rivers. At certain periods of the year their food consists entirely of the buds and leaves of the spruce and fir. The flesh then both tastes and smells strongly of these trees, and is not good to eat ; but in the fall of the year the flavour is better.

Mr. Leith Adams, referring to the "partridge dog," writes :—

"Some of these mongrel dogs display remarkably good training. Their tuition is accomplished in this way. A cord attached to the leg of a dead partridge is passed over the branch of a tree, and as the dog draws on the bird it is gradually pulled along the ground and then suddenly swung up to the branch. I am told that an intelligent mongrel will become proficient after a few lessons. On one occasion," he adds, "a very degenerate and diminutive representative of the genus raised a covey of partridges in thick cover, but when we came to inspect the trees not a bird was to be seen, and

we were on the point of departure, when the dog became much excited and set to barking furiously under a large maple. In vain we looked, for no partridge was to be seen; still the dog barked and began to bite and tear at the tree, when at length three birds were discovered standing motionless on the moss-covered boughs, and within a few yards of us. The owner informed me that whenever the creature lost patience, and took to biting objects around a tree, it was a sure sign that there were birds on the branches, and that he seldom left the lumber and logging paths in search of them until he heard the bark."

According to Sir John Richardson, all the thick and swampy black-spruce forests between Canada and the Arctic Sea abound with this bird, and considerable numbers exist in the severest seasons as high as the 67th parallel.

Partridge-shooting commences about the second week in September, and concludes on the 1st day of January. The game laws are continually being modified.

Mr. Long, in his chapter "The Partridges' Roll Call," has given me a new suggestion, *viz.*, "If the mother bird is killed by owl, or hawk, or weasel, the flock still holds together while berries

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last under the leadership of one of their own number more bold or cunning than the others." I have observed a hundred times the scattering of a flock of ruffed grouse, but I cannot recall any instance when the birds followed any particular leader. They dispersed in confusion, some winging their flight to a distant tree, while others ran swiftly and blindly in any direction where a hiding could be found, until the danger was past.

I have often listened to the "roll call," but this sound was uttered continuously by the anxious mother to warn her chicks, or gather them to the shelter of her warm feathers. The drumming of the cock I have already described as a means of communicating to the hen his whereabouts, but the leadership and general management of a mixed covey are to my mind both original and new. I shall probably take an early opportunity of studying this matter and examining its foundation. I have watched these birds for hours in their native haunts, and with a knowledge of still-hunting and stalking which one never forgets, I look forward with pleasure to verify Mr. Long's wonderful conclusions. These conclusions have been arrived at from

his personal observations, and his narrative is so pictorial, that I quote from it in his own words :—

“In the midst of a thicket of low black alders, surrounded by a perfect hedge of bushes, I found him at last. He was on the lower end of a fallen log, gliding rapidly up and down, spreading wings and tail and budding ruff, as if he were drumming, and sending out his peculiar call at every pause. Above him, in a long line on the same log, five other ruffed grouse (partridges) were sitting perfectly quiet, save now and then, when an answer came to the leader's call, they would turn their heads and listen intently till the underbrush parted cautiously and another bird flitted up beside them. Then another call, and from the distant hillside a faint kevit-kevit and a rush of wings in answer, and another partridge would shoot in on swift pinions to pull himself up on the log beside his fellows. The line would open hospitably to let him in ; then the row grew quiet again, as the leader called, turning their heads from side to side for the faint answers.

“There were nine on the log at last. The calling grew louder and louder ; yet for several

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minutes now no answer came back. The flock grew uneasy ; the leader ran from his log into the brush and back again, calling loudly, while a low chatter, the first break in their strange silence, ran back and forth through the family on the log.

"There were others to come ; but where were they, and why did they tarry ? It was growing late ; already an owl had hooted, and the roosting-place was still far away. 'Prut, prut, pr-r-eee,' called the leader, and the chatter ceased as the whole flock listened.

"I turned my head to the hillside to listen also for the laggards ; but there was no answer. Save for the cry of a low-flying loon and the snap of a twig—too sharp and heavy for little feet to make—the woods were all silent. As I turned to the log again, something warm and heavy rested against my side. Then I knew ; and with the knowledge came a swift thrill of regret that made me feel guilty and out of place in the silent woods. The leader was calling, the silent flock were waiting for two of their number who would never answer the call again.

"I lay scarcely ten yards from the log on which the sad little drama went on in the twilight

shadows, while the great silence grew deeper and deeper, as if the wilderness itself were in sympathy and ceased its cries to listen. Once, at the first glimpse of the group, I had raised my rifle and covered the head of the largest bird ; but curiosity to know what they were doing held me back. Now a deeper feeling had taken its place ; the rifle slid from my hand and lay unnoticed among the fallen leaves.

“Again the leader called. The flock drew itself up, like a row of grey-brown statues, every eye bright, every ear listening, till some vague sense of fear and danger drew them together ; and they huddled on the ground in a close group, all but the leader, who stood above them, counting them over and over, apparently, and anon sending his cry out into the darkening woods, etc., etc. . . .

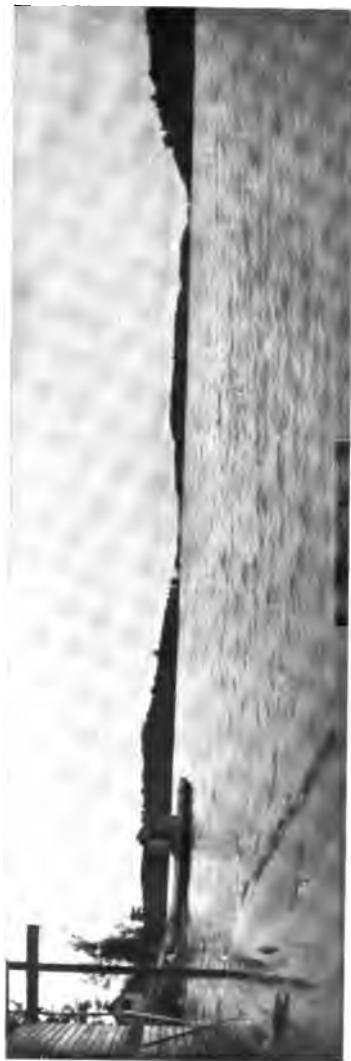
“I raised my head and gave the clear whit-whit of a running partridge. Instantly the leader answered : the flock sprang to the log again and turned their heads in my direction to listen. Another call, and now the flock dropped to the ground and lay close, while the leader drew himself up straight on the log and became part of a dead stub beside him.

"Something was wrong in my call ; the birds were suspicious, knowing not what danger had kept their fellows silent so long, and now threatened them out of the black alders. A moment's intent listening : then the leader stepped slowly down his log and came cautiously, halting, hiding, listening, gliding, swinging far out to one side and back again in stealthy advance, till he drew himself up abruptly at the sight of my face peering out of the underbrush. For two minutes he never stirred so much as an eyelid. Then he glided swiftly back, with a faint, puzzled, questioning kwit-kwit, to where his flock were waiting. A low signal that I could barely hear, a swift movement—then the flock thundered away in scattered flight into the silent friendly woods.

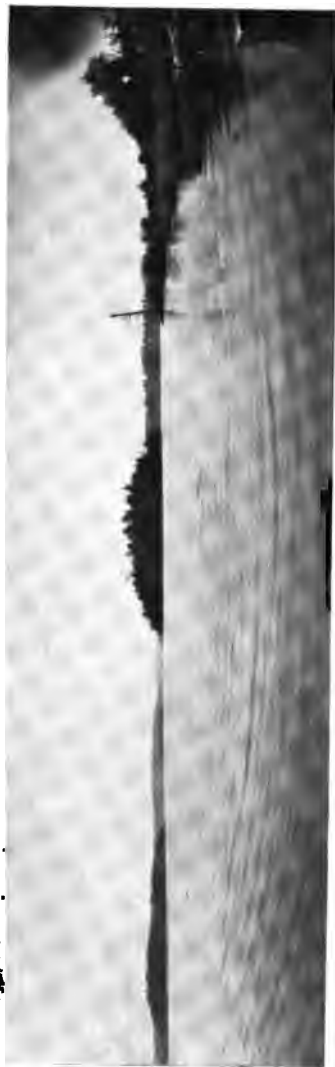
"Ten minutes later I was crouched in some thick underbrush, looking up into a great spruce, when I could just make out the leader standing by an upright branch in sharp silhouette against the glowing west. I had followed his swift flight, and now lay listening again to his searching call as it went out through the twilight, calling his little flock to the roosting tree. From the swamp and hillside, and far down by the quiet lake, they

answered, faintly at first, then with clearer call and the whirr of swift wings as they came in."

The above description of this bird is very graphic and correct, with the exception of one serious slip, doubtless a clerical error. "The partridges" (ruffed grouse) never whirr in flight unless suddenly flushed, or conscious of pursuit. This whirr, I have already pointed out, is a natural protection against their enemies, and the greater the danger the greater the whirr. I have consulted the very highest authorities, and they distinguish between the flight of this bird when pursued, and when flying naturally at its ease from place to place. Almost all living creatures are more or less actuated with a spirit of curiosity—this applies equally to all parts of the world—one has only to lie still in the woods for a few hours to realise the interest with which he is regarded by living things that surround him. I have often been peeped at by a ruffed grouse.



BLACKSTONE LAKE.



CRANE LAKE.

[See p. 227.]

VIII

FISHING IN MUSKOKA, ETC.

EXTRACTS from Notes. Friday.—“It has been very hot to-day. We fished during the morning in Blackstone Lake. Mac had a 35-lbs. maskinonge on his line. The incident was remarkable. Having hooked a small bass, he was playing it toward the boat, when this huge fish struck, grasping the bass with a grip of iron. During the afternoon I landed upon some of the islands and shot about a dozen ruffed grouse. My friend's catch for the day bumped the scale at 30 lbs.

“On Saturday we went to Crane Lake, which is a large sheet of water at the end of Blackstone River. We flushed a huge crane, but saw no duck. We landed more pickerel and bass in an hour than we could eat, so, after a sleep under the shade of some large trees, we rowed to Arcadia Island, where our guide prepared and cooked

our lunch. I amused myself with an exploring trip. The travelling was very difficult ; probably no one but an Indian had ever trodden the same path. Trees were piled one over another. Some had fallen crossways and remained permanently arched ; others were in disordered heaps as though tossed by a violent hurricane. It was under these circumstances of clambering and avoiding that I finally lost my way. Frequently when I scrambled to the top of a fallen trunk, my weight would cause the rotten bark to collapse, giving me a choking bath of dust and decayed wood. After a time I arrived at a swamp, but the mosquitos made such an overwhelming attack, that I was forced to beat a retreat. By the time I reached the camp my body had been stung in fifty places. Mac's fate had not been much better, he had been bitten on the chin by a hornet, and though my hands were like boxing-gloves, it was more endurable than a double chin.

"While we were at lunch, two Americans arrived with a heavy take of frogs. The method of procuring them is interesting. The dignified bull-frog sits majestically upon a root or log, in swamp or river water. The angler approaches him with an ordinary fishing-rod, and naked

hook ; the frog opens his mouth to bellow out, 'You're drunk,' 'you're drunk.' When the canoe is only two yards distant the rod is made ready. If a rapid, well-directed, upward movement is made with the hook, bull-frog is caught just under the chin. These creatures are often as large as pigeons, and their kicking and struggling give much excitement, and, I fear, amusement. If the angler misses his mark entirely, he may be permitted to make another attempt, but the slightest touch or scratch is followed by a jump and splash, and bull-frog has gone for ever. The legs are the only edible part of these frogs.

"During the afternoon Underhill took Mac, and I went with Kendall. He had decided to row me to the further end of Crane Lake, where he had previously visited a place notorious for wild duck. The voyage was very enjoyable. We skirted the wooded banks hoping to snipe a deer, and several times we flushed small flocks of duck. Finally, we went ashore at an isolated bay some five or six miles south.

"It took some time to plan out the route, and when we had done so we lost ourselves twice, and had to return to the boat for a hunting-knife

to blaze a path. The deer-runs and bear-tracks were so numerous, and their regular paths to the lake so ancient, that one unaccustomed to the bush might have expected to arrive at some clearing and human habitation. After we had travelled about an hour and a half, we came upon some steep rocky hills, and it was not until we had ascended to the top that we obtained a view of a lovely unnamed lake. Kendall left me here, pointing out a secluded spot at the extreme end, where I could conceal myself while he went north to drive the duck down to me. The bush was so dense that his footsteps had hardly ceased to be heard when I found myself lost. A shotgun and a rifle are cumbersome luggage, especially for one obliged to climb over huge fallen trees, and descend slippery banks. Sometimes I dropped my weapons from a height of 7 ft., and followed clinging to boughs and roots of trees. Occasionally these broke with my weight and I paused to rub the bruises.

“When I arrived at the swamp I took up a position behind a tree where the lake narrows and has on either shore thick reed-beds. Here I waited patiently for an hour, but no ducks came. I could not help contrasting this experience

with the Indian River, Florida, where I had found duck more plentiful than fish in Muskoka, and with sufficient guns could have filled the hold of a ship. (I spent two winters in Florida, and I am sure some of the flocks of wild fowl might have been counted by the thousand.) At length I lit my pipe and sat down in despair. I had scarcely done so before I heard a shout and had an easy right and left overhead. A few more followed; but when Kendall informed me afterwards of the miles he had walked, and the apparent failure of his efforts to frighten the birds, I viewed the results as very unsatisfactory.

“It was getting late, and the sun was shut out by a curious haze. The air had become thick and stifling, and something appeared to be wrong. A few moments of doubt, and then we both exclaimed almost in a breath, ‘The bush is on fire!’ I recalled with regret the lighting of my pipe and careless neglect to extinguish the flame of my wax vesta as we stepped from the boat, and the horror of being cut off from the Crane Lake, and forced before the flames into an unknown country, decided us that we would rush through the smoke instead of away from it, while there was yet time, for delay meant certain death.

"The casual, swinging gait we assumed at the start was soon changed to rapid speed. Men who have run for their lives have experienced that peculiar staying power which Nature supplies. We ran without pausing for nearly an hour. Although it was very dark, and the smoke became painful to the eyes, we managed to keep each other in sight during the first part of our flight. Sometimes we would stumble and fall, when the rocks and low projecting branches, acting like snares, tripped our feet, and brought us heavily to the ground. The flames seemed to gain rapidly, and notwithstanding our efforts to reach the lake, the distance seemed as far as ever, and the blood-curdling roar of the flames grew more terrible every moment. Often we urged each other on, hearing in the distance the crash of falling trees. The sounds intensified as we advanced, but this arose rather from our highly strung nerves than reality.

"At length I became so exhausted from bruises, copious draughts of swamp water, and decayed vegetation, that I despaired of my life. Once while scrambling over the top of a huge fallen log the weight of my body broke through the rotten bark, and I disappeared half smothered

into the hollow centre. Kendall saw this at a distance, and paused for a moment, in spite of his peril, to bestow upon me a sickly smile and word of encouragement. When I managed to extricate myself I lay for a few minutes in a fainting condition upon the ground.

“While in this state of helplessness, I suddenly felt an electric thrill pass through me. It was the grip of Kendall’s hand as he firmly clutched my arm and hurried me onward. How wonderful are the mysteries of hypnotic science! In an instant Kendall’s will-power communicated itself to me ; my faculties were restored, and the determination to live became more intense. The last words I heard as I sprang forward were, ‘Follow me!’ Running at the utmost speed through the bush, with our eyes half blinded, caused us unconsciously to take two different angles and to become separated. Once more I stumbled and fell with no cheerful voice to urge me on. I think it was the pain in my eyes that brought me again to my feet, and I had scarcely run a dozen yards when I perceived a silvery streak of water through the trees, and in a few seconds had plunged in and swum to an island in the bay. Kendall had already launched the boat, and soon

we were gazing with awe upon the wonderful sight of a bush-fire viewed from a large stretch of water. The fire we perceived had been raging for hours, and probably had originated twenty or thirty miles away.

“When we got clear of the bay we found the wind blowing hard and large white-capped waves appeared on every side in the direction we were going. These waves increased in volume as we advanced and ultimately Kendall could make no way against them. Relinquishing the helm we each took an oar and rowed together with all our strength. After many pauses to bale out our half-filled boat, and wet through with lake-water, we ultimately reached Blackstone River. More than once we were nearly swamped by breaking waves. Entering Blackstone Lake the storm burst upon us with all its fury, and it was with the greatest difficulty that we could make any headway. Considerable argument arose as to our wisest course, and finally it was decided to hug the headlands and sheltered coast. In this way we rowed nearly twice the distance, but considering it had taken us five minutes to advance one yard in the middle of the lake, we were thankful to know the water was smoother and

our danger over. Rowing, football, and athletics are splendid staying powers throughout life. Kendall was so exhausted that he at length told me he could row no farther, and I seized both oars to fight for the shore. It was like the finish of a race, and we both watched with anxiety every yard gained, or lost. It was pitch dark when we reached land. And how we ever found our primitive hut and sleeping-place is a mystery to this hour."

I have recalled these facts because one is so accustomed to paint recollections of perhaps the happiest fortnight of one's life with too delicate a brush. Sport surpassed even my Scotch friend's expectations, but there was a spicy taste of danger, excitement, roughings, and adventure associated with it that rather added to than detracted from my pleasure. Another sportsman writing about these lakes expresses himself as follows :—

"The shores of Crane and Blackstone Lakes are capital specimens of the primitive wilderness, and long may they continue so. The few who have visited their teeming waters have mostly been genuine fishermen, who are happiest when far away from conventionalities and habitations. But one clearing broke the majestic sweep of

the grand old forests ; within the sheltered bays the loons laughed undisturbed, and the wild birds splashed in the marshy edges or upon the sandy shores with none to make them afraid.

“ We were out for maskinonge, and took no account of either black bass or pickerel. It seems strange to talk of shaking off black bass and making disrespectful remarks about these gamy gentry when they insisted on taking the hook, but they were so plentiful as to be really troublesome.

“ When an angler goes forth to catch the maskinonge it is necessary to be careful lest the maskinonge should catch him. The native method of taking the maskinonge in the primeval waters of Canada is by a small clothes-line, hauled in by main strength when the fish bites, but we proposed to troll, as should an angler, with the rod. Ours were split bamboo rods $9\frac{1}{2}$ ft. long, quadruplex reel, and braided line, 2 ft. of medium-sized copper wire, a No. 4 spoon with double hooks, and finally a good gaff.

“ Our guide, as we started over to Crane Lake the first morning, indulged in sundry smiles, and remarked that we should break our rods, so that,

although placid in outward mien, I felt inwardly a little nervous.

“Swinging around a little point, with some twenty yards of line astern, before fishing a great while I felt a sudden movement at the spoon that was more like a crunch than a bite. It took only a second to give the rod a turn that fixed the hooks, and another second to discover that I had hung something. Scarcely had I tightened the line when the fish started. I do not know that I wanted to stop him, but I felt the line slip rapidly from the reel as though attached to a submarine torpedo. The first run was a long one, but the line was longer, and the fish stopped before the line was bare. This was my opportunity, and I bade the boatman swing his craft across the course, and reeling in the slack line, I turned his head toward the deeper water. Forty-five minutes of as pretty a fight as one could wish to see left my acquaintance alongside the boat, and before he recovered his surprise the gaff was in his gills and the boatman lifted him on board.

“He weighed 14 lbs. on the steelyards and was my heaviest fish. There were other encounters of a similar character, but none quite

so protracted ; but I wouldn't be afraid of the largest veteran in the lake, and all fishermen who aim for sport will assuredly troll with the rod.

“Our time was limited, far too short, and, in a word, a day and a half on Crane Lake gave us, without counting bass, ten maskinonge, whose weight aggregated 110 lbs. (on the scales), an average weight of 11 lbs. per fish.”

The lower reaches of these two famous lakes can be travelled *via* Lake Muskoka and Bala. The route lies along the Moon River, where maskinonge are said to be the heaviest in Canada, and it is true some monsters have been hooked there. I once travelled alone in mid-winter from Bala to Georgian Bay, spending one night in an old lumber shanty, and another in an Indian wigwam. The travelling then was good, and my Indian pony carried me swiftly over the deep frozen snow. The wolves rather alarmed me at night, but otherwise my trip was without much danger.

We spent the latter portion of our sojourn on Blackstone Lake with the Van Doughnuts (as we call them). Van Doughnuts is one of the keenest sportsmen I have ever met, and this

virtue condones for the roughest accommodation and feeding to be paid for anywhere. The rules of daily life are primitive in the extreme. Washing-basins and the ordinary simple details of civilisation are unknown. You must not wash in your bedroom, nor must you expect a towel larger than a pocket-handkerchief. Care, too, must be taken in going to bed, for there are no carpets, and the wide chinks in the floor enable you to see all that is going on in the room below, and the occupants in that room have also the same undesirable privilege. Perhaps it is on this account that a sort of secret curfew-law is established here, *viz.*, "Lights out at nine!" No light is ever carried up-stairs (or up-ladders would be more correct).

Our request or demand for a lamp at eleven o'clock created almost a stampede. One mystery we never solved, though it gave us some concern, was at what hour and how often, cold water touched the skin of the Van Doughnuts. We braved our difficulties by taking a swim every morning, but the family as we passed them appeared to shiver at the sight of a towel. The food consisted almost entirely of fried pork of a cast-iron type. No meal was ever without it

that I can recall. We never saw a piece of beef or mutton once. So heavily did this weigh upon our minds that while we were on our return journey we sang "Auld Lang Syne" whenever we met a drove of pigs; but though Van Doughnuts himself held the reins he continued to smile happily the whole journey. Van Doughnuts' is the place for sport, and the keen sportsman while in the hands of this hardy old hunter will fish in the best places, shoot the most deer, and get more solid pleasure and amusement than at any other place I know of. With a few hours' delay at Toronto all necessary food and comforts can be provided and brought direct without much trouble.

The entire family shoot well and represent a formidable party when armed. We endured our first guide until he became unbearable. I wrote this description of him in my note-book: "J. is not young, but he is young compared with his very stuffy, unwashed father. He eats and sleeps well. Always asserts that the best fishing is in Blackstone Lake, and the best shooting about half a mile from his headquarters. His plan is to post his men, and then go with his father to beat up for game. While he is gone

you wait anxiously listening to every sound of an approach. You picture J., climbing over rocky places, scrambling through bogs, encouraging his hounds, etc., and realising how warm the day is, your mind is filled with sympathy and appreciation—while J. lies sound asleep as I once stalked him down.”

This conduct is disgusting, and I strongly advise men to go to Van Doughnuts, or procure some one recommended by Mr. Cox, of Port Sanfield.

During our explorations both MacLaren and I saw passenger-pigeons three times, and my theory, that many presumably extinct birds have fled like the Indians to remote unknown spots, in this case is true. Travellers to the Cascades added to zoology within recent years the ou-ka-la, and doubtless in those wild, unknown lands others exist or remain in hiding.

“I think I may assert,” writes Rowan, “without fear of contradiction, that the angling in Canada is the finest in the world. Many thousands of trout streams and some hundreds of salmon rivers discharge their waters into the Gulf and River St. Lawrence. From Lake Ontario down to the Straits of Belle Isle—a

distance of nearly 2,000 miles—on each shore of the river there is hardly a mile of coast-line without a river or stream. Thousands and thousands of lakes, all of which hold trout, lie hidden away in the forest; in the majority of them perhaps a fly has never been cast. Above Quebec most of the rivers have been spoiled for salmon.

“Trout-fishing on hundreds, I may say on thousands, of charming rivers and lakes is open to every one; and under better regulations there would be salmon-fishing for every Canadian angler.

“Of all summer residences that I have ever seen, give me a camp on a good Canadian salmon river. The banks of the river are all beautiful; in some places clad with forest that rises gently from the river's edge, in others they take the form of rocky terraces, many hundred feet in height, rising abruptly from the water. Some of these terraces are bare, others are clothed with spruce and cedar. Here there is a beaver-meadow at the mouth of the brook, surrounded by undulating forest land; there a naked hillside, dotted over with enormous boulders.”

There is only one great drawback to river-

fishing in Canada, and that is the flies. There are days in the fishing season when the sun is obscured by a sort of haze when the thin-skinned man (especially if his hair be reddish) is unable to endure them. Ointment, veils, gloves, tobacco-smoke!—nothing can protect him. He is reduced to a state of temporary idiocy, and unless he wishes to continue to suffer he had better fly to his tent, where, sitting over a smoke of burning cedar-bark, so pungent and stifling that the tears flow from his eyes, he may experience some relief. Flies cannot stand the full blaze of the sun, neither do they like a breeze of wind, therefore the more open and exposed the situation the better for a fisherman's camp. Personally I have never selected the rivers, but confined my camping-ground to a lake. The spot I should recommend would be a rocky isle of about a quarter of an acre, situated a few hundred yards off the shore. While fishing in Crane and Blackstone Lakes we were entirely free from these pests, though I can vividly recall a night spent at Fairmont, Lake Muskoka—when I was driven from my bed, and sought refuge in the cool waters of the lake. I shall never forget that moonlight swim. I took the precaution to carry a mackintosh, a warm

shirt, slippers, etc., and spent a delightful night upon an island where the flies could not reach me.

A veil fastened round the crown of a broad-brimmed hat, tied about the throat with an elastic band, and kept clear of the face by means of crinoline hoops, is a good protection. I strongly advise hunters to get a mosquito bed-net if they intend to camp out before September. There are several preparations recommended against fly-bites, but unfortunately the dirtiest are the most effective. Mixtures of pennyroyal and almond oil, or of oil of tar and turpentine in equal parts, are of some use; but if the angler wishes to be completely fly-proof, regardless of expense, he must go in for a villainous ointment made of equal parts of tar and pork fat.

Flies, bad as they are, are not very troublesome to the Canadian sportsman. They prefer pale-faced men from the cities, but the red-skin and well-seasoned hunters are comparatively safe from their attacks. Mosquitos are perhaps as bad and as plentiful in parts of Essex as in the most fly-pested fishing-grounds of Canada. An article appeared in the *Daily Mail* on Saturday, August 22nd, 1903, headed:—

“Myriads of Mosquitos. Essex suffering from

a plague. The people of Essex who live in the neighbourhood of the Thames are at present disturbed by myriads of mosquitos. The hospitals are all day busy attending to cases, many of which are of a very serious nature. . . . An old lady who was bitten has died. One of the house-surgeons at the West Ham Hospital has had to discontinue work as the result of a bitten wrist. Not a member of the staff has escaped without a bite. A garden-party which was recently held came to a premature and hurried conclusion, the guests, among whom was a bishop, having to beat a hasty retreat from a cloud of these little pests."

The best time for fishing is from about the middle of June to the beginning of August. There are many little lakes in the immediate neighbourhood of Blackstone said to be teeming with fish. We passed on our way through the bush Little Bass Lake on the left, and White Fish Lake, covering about 300 acres, on the right. Horse-shoe Lake also lies in this direction, and is much nearer. This sheet of water covers about 250 acres, and has the reputation for excellent trout-fishing. There are four islands on Horse-shoe Lake, the largest being about four acres

in extent. Windfall Lake is celebrated for perch, but barely exceeds fifty acres of water space. I am of opinion that no fishing can be found on the face of the globe to compare with Blackstone and Crane Lakes. I tried all the famous spots in this neighbourhood, and during previous visits I have explored the fishing-grounds of Lake Joseph, Lake Rosseau, and Lake Muskoka, but Crane Lake stands first in my estimation as a region beyond the tramp of trippers, townsmen, and objectionables. Here one realises freedom, health, and enjoyment. The sporting paradise of Mr. Leith Adams would appear to be Grand Lake. His description of scenery and Nature is realistic.

“One of the most picturesque portions of the Schoodic region,” he writes, “is Grand Lake. This noble sheet of water is broken here and there by islets, and surrounded, even to the water’s edge, with forests of pine and hard wood, whilst its bottom is covered with granitic boulders, which, in combination with drift, are spread far and wide among the arboreal vegetation around. Great banks of gravel run along the side of the effluent stream, where a slate formation, possibly Silurian, has a dip scarcely less than the perpendicular,

and a strike right across the mouth of the Grand Lake stream. The slate, again, is flanked on the lakeside by syenitic rocks, which form the basin of this and other lakes.

“The stillness of the scenery is impressive, and after the eye has ranged over the great expanse of wood and water, or revelled in the varied, changing, and unparalleled beauty of the maple and other leaves in autumn, and got accustomed to the prospect, the mind naturally longs to know what manner of animals live in these forests of maple, poplar, spruce, and pine, with the charred and weathered forms of their dead brethren towering weird-like above the living. Or, peering downwards, we desire to become familiar with the denizens of the deep. Then, shooting across the placid bosom of the lake for several miles, we begin to meditate a return to camp, when hark ! at last the solitude is broken. What is that loud plaintive cry proceeding from yonder island, and echoed back in scarcely feebler tones from the opposite cove ? It is the familiar ‘wulloo’ of the great northern diver, and we spy its long neck in the distance. Louder and more frequent are the cries ; another and another chime in on our starboard side as we move rapidly forward,

and the Indian spies young loons with their parents not 500 yards off. More garrulous do the old birds become as we approach ; at length, after expending their cries in vain, they raise their graceful figures, and in the usual way, half-flying, half-swimming, splash the waters with their wings like the paddles of a steamboat for upwards of fifty yards, then rising above the surface, shoot rapidly away to yonder islet in the distance and abandon their offspring to their fate.

“ A more beautiful sight can scarcely be imagined than, by the side of some pool, etc., to peer through the darkening waters, and watch the finny tribes pursuing their various modes of life. It is not often that one is so fortunate, but now and then among the clear waters I have come on a basin, with its bottom covered with rounded stones, where, by the side of the water-logged pine or jutting shelf, half-hidden from view, and, tiger-like, prepared for a sudden dash, lurks the brook-trout.

“ See, those large bright eyes are scanning every corner ! How graceful are the movements of the fins, every ray of which is in motion ; whilst the regular heaving of the gills, and the

play of the lissom but muscular body, show that he is able and ready to pounce on whatever objects his choice may determine. At length something appears, and before we can well note his absence he has shot through the clear waters, captured his prey, and returned once more to his hiding-place."

With regard to tackle an experienced angler remarks :—

"An 18-foot rod is in my opinion long enough for any river. I have fished with rods of all lengths, from 15 ft. to 20 ft., and consider an 18-foot rod the best. I would also recommend the salmon-fisher in Canada to have a second rod 16½ ft. in length. As regards rods opinions differ."

We found the steel rod used chiefly by Americans for maskinonge, and MacLaren had a long argument as to the merits and demerits of this rod. I am inclined to think a limber rod in the hands of an expert will be found preferable to a stiff one.

The reel is a most important part of the outfit, and care should be taken to provide three or four in case of accidents. Fishermen not only differ in the matter of rods, but also in the matter of

reels, some preferring a check and others a plain wheel.

A general guide to the experienced angler will be to anticipate fish varying from 3 lbs. to 40 lbs. in weight, and some knowledge of pike-fishing will thoroughly qualify for bass and large fish. Black bass have a peculiar habit of jumping out of the water, and should the line be slack they invariably escape. I am of opinion that artificial bait will not be successful in these primitive waters. Trolling has been universally the method adopted here. Whether the weather be good or bad a large basket is certain.

Still-fishing for trout requires suitable fishing weather. It is wise to let the fish hook himself, and when you feel his weight on the line, then, and not before, you should raise the top of the rod gradually, avoiding all jerks ; give the fish all the pull that the rod and tackle will stand without danger of straining. This drives the hook over the barb into the fish's mouth ; when he feels it, he probably runs out twenty, thirty, or forty yards of line at express pace, and then throws himself once or twice out of the water. In this first race he cannot be checked without failure,

but immediately it is over he should be tightened up again. The general theory is to give the fish all the strain the tackle will bear at first, and when this is done, in nine cases out of ten the first ten seconds will decide his fate.

The gaff should be of good steel, and not made with a screw, but with a long flattened shank to tie on. There is a great deal in having a good man to gaff. The sons of Van Doughnuts are excellent gaffers and all-round fishermen.

The great charm of fishing in the Muskoka lakes consists in the many resources of sport open to one. If the fish will not bite, we troll, and though perhaps this may appear poor sport, yet the novice will find a fish weighing 30 lb. with plenty of fight will test his skill with a limber rod to the utmost.

I cannot recall any instance of the lake fish rising to artificial flies, but had we been here some two months earlier we might have tested them better. Green frogs and small fry are eagerly taken by pickerel, bass, and maskinonge.

In a general way the best attendants the angler can have in Canada are the Indians. In the first place, they know where fish lie, and, in the second place, these people are all born sportsmen ; they

take as much delight in the fishing as their master. Mr. Cox, of Port Sanfield, can recommend reliable guides and Indians.

I do not think much art or skill is required to catch the trout. I have had more success with a piece of line fastened to an alder rod, and baited with a grasshopper, than with all the most approved tackle I have used in subsequent years. In spring these fish are very voracious, and dash furiously at any light object drawn rapidly against the current.

Grand Lake mentioned by Leith Adams is quite a different locality to the Grand Lake of Northern Canada, from whence the young hunter came with his wonderful wolf story. The former can be easily reached by the St. Andrews and Woodstock Railroad, and the distance by canoe to the Grand Lake stream is about twelve miles, whereas Grand Lake (Canada) is situated in the caribou and moose country, more than 200 miles north of Muskoka, where the trapper's adventure probably occurred or near one of the many lakes south or north of Abbitibbe Lake. Twelve years ago these districts were overrun with wolves. Grand Lake (Maine) appears to be an excellent fishing spot. I am informed that this is the

general rendezvous of the silvery salmon-trout, where as many as fifty may be captured by one rod in any day during May and June, and where barrells are annually salted or iced, and transported to the great cities of the United States. Notwithstanding the annual increase in the number of fishermen, there appears to be no diminution of fish whatever. It is suggested that the larger number of adults captured gives a better chance to the young to come to maturity.

"After a pleasant row through these lakes," writes a well-known angler, "where broods of wild ducks kept my gun in constant requisition, we disembarked at the debouchure of Grand Lake stream, and pitched our tent under the trees, when the unfortunate Professor spent a night of intense torment from mosquitos. I don't exactly know why these pests occasionally single out certain persons in preference to others, but, although I have had very good cause to complain in common with others, I must say neither black fly, sand-fly, nor mosquito managed to make me so miserable as many of my companions. Indeed, on the following morning, after breakfast, whilst the Indian was conveying the canoe and our chattels along the portage by the banks of the

torrent, it was an odd, and I must allow a ludicrous, sight to see our party on the march. Like a man suddenly caught in a shower, at the same time suffering from an excruciating toothache, his coat-collar raised, and pocket-handkerchief tied round his head, my friend led the van, with his vasculum on his shoulders, and in his hand a spruce bough, which he whisked about his ears, whilst the tormentors, blackening his neck and hands in tens of thousands, were almost driving him distracted.

At length, after an uncomfortable two hours' march, we gained the banks of Grand Lake, and encamped.

I lost no time in repairing to the water, and at the second throw two salmon-trout jumped together.

I hope I have not exaggerated my Sporting Paradise, but from a fisherman's standpoint I will guarantee excellent sport surpassed anywhere to Crane Lake, Muskoka.



to live

"I BELIEVED EVERY STEP OF THAT TERRIBLE JOURNEY WOULD BE MY LAST."

[See p. 256.]

IX

WINTER IN THE BACKWOODS

WE were on a long journey, and as we proceeded northward the weather became warmer and brighter. Our thoughts and conversation now turned upon summer plans. The days became somewhat monotonous. There was the same repetition of scenery. Frequently we passed through a belt of forest timber that would have brought a fortune if shipped abroad : then there was the low-lying swamp, as a contrast, with its thick, tangled saplings ; or a wilderness of rock with deep clefts and dangerous hollows ; or the valley and rugged hills bordering unnamed lakes and rivulets ; or the twisting narrow path, skirting the wooded gulley and fertile lowlands. At night we would sit and chat by our camp fire, sharing the long night-watches and lulled to sleep by the mysterious music of the woods, or the moans and howls of wolves. Several days

passed without any important incident, and beyond an occasional stumble and fall, that provoked more mirth than injury, there was nothing to record. We were now rapidly approaching our destination. We were expecting delays at the large lakes on account of the weather. It had suddenly become warm during the day, though toward evening the temperature fell. It is at this time of the year that lives are frequently lost. Persons who may travel over the lake-ice at early dawn upon a thick, smooth crust find it becomes slush and water at noon. The ice does not break as an ice-pond in the Old Country, upon which we may safely skate after a few nights of hard frost. The lakes of Canada are in March coated with four to six feet of solid frozen surface, composed of good ice, which would be the frozen lake-water, then snows partly melted and partly frozen solid, then snows melted and entirely frozen, covered with thick snow upon which a coating of ice has been formed a few inches thick. Hence it is a common sight to see a man driving over lakes that appear entirely water.

I shall never forget walking from Gregory to Port Sanfield during the month of April,

1889. The first half-mile was delightful, the ice being strong and smooth. Then the surface ice began to crack, and as I proceeded it broke through, giving me a drop of nearly two feet into the water above the foundation ice. Mr. Gregory, who was my companion at the time, recalled this adventure during my visit to him last year. He had the greatest difficulty in removing my fears, because the sensation at every step reminded me of my previous fall through the ice in England and I believed every step of that terrible journey would bring me face to face with death. A sleigh driven over the ice at this season looks like some huge water-monster splashing on his way.

At this condition of the ice there is really no danger. Perhaps it may happen, after two days, that all the water has disappeared and left the surface of the lake covered with white and black ice. It is now that the dangerous time has come, for the white ice may be porous, and the dark blotches air-holes. Sinking through the porous ice reminds one of the cruel sport of shooting sea-pigs with a shot-gun. The porpoise dives merrily, until a well-timed shot strikes him ; then, instead of perforating his hide with shot, the

whole charge seems to enter its victim like a cannon-ball, causing a huge piece of flesh to collapse and sink inwards. The ice does not crack and break, but collapses, and disappears inwards, bearing down upon its porous platform the unhappy traveller above.

The road through the bush at this season is also dangerous. Here, not only has the frozen snow become porous, but the earth itself, which froze in early winter before the snow fell, commences to expand and upheave. In this way one experiences miniature earthquakes and eruptions. Sometimes the chasm formed extends for a long distance, and the hatchet must be used to clear a path elsewhere. I have personally been delayed for hours in this way. The bush being so thick on either side, the only way to advance was to cut down the obstacles. These delays are not only unpleasant on account of the short days, but are also somewhat dangerous.

The she-bears, like their sires, are nervous creatures, timid under normal conditions, but at the early spring, when they emerge from their retreats accompanied by their tiny young, they will not only defend themselves fiercely when interfered with, but will even act on the aggressive

and attack a man. With ordinary care these attacks can be avoided. The bear will not pay any heed to a person who steps aside from her path, and does not awaken her suspicion. The danger is when one suddenly meets a she-bear with her young along a narrow path of a round, sharp, hidden turn. A friend of mine once passed within six yards of a bear, and being somewhat amused by her indifference, threw a piece of stick in her direction. Immediately she turned on him, and had it not been for a rifle-shot he would have experienced some rough handling. I myself was once pursued for a mile by a she-bear at whom I had foolishly fired a revolver, and my horse, having a strong antipathy to even the smell of bears, nearly threw me from the saddle in his terror-stricken flight.

One morning we awoke to discover a sudden change had taken place in the weather. During the previous night there had been a rapid thaw. As I proceeded to where we had stored our traps, the surface ice upon the snow broke at every step, and drenched me to the waist with slush and water. The short distance occupied a long time to traverse, and when I returned to camp I was almost as wet from perspiration as from

water. Travelling under these circumstances was exceedingly heavy work.

The prospect after breakfast became worse, and, after a fruitless attempt to walk half a mile, we turned back to our camp, which happened to be pitched upon some sloping rocks that were rapidly being denuded of their white covering. There was one consolation, and that was an end to noisy wolves. It is only in rare cases, when the surface snow is frozen hard, that wolves, driven mad with hunger, will attack men. When the crust weakens, all heavy animals, like the moose, caribou, and Virginian deer, become easy prey, their heavy weight rendering swift flight impossible. After a few rushes and plunges they fall exhausted and are devoured. It is at this season that a hunter on snow-shoes can overtake deer. Before the Game Laws were passed limiting the number to be killed by each man to three, hundreds were slain by a single person, and the game would soon have been exterminated. These restrictions refer to hunters; the Government does not object to the settler securing whatever game he can to supply his needs in respect of food. Slaying for profit is forbidden.

We occupied some time devising rough snow-

shoes, but though the woods supplied us with good frames, our efforts were not crowned with much success. One shoe would apparently go well, and then the other would double up. It was nearly dark before we completed one pair. The evening was mild, and we slept comfortably with a small fire.

Next day the travelling was even impossible for snow-shoes. Food and ammunition were nearly exhausted. We had the good luck during the afternoon to shoot a large rabbit that stole up to inspect the camp. This so-called rabbit was in reality a hare, but when cooked we found the flesh very dry and hard. Herbert remarked that it was like eating wood, and considering the staple food of these hares during the winter consists almost entirely of young twigs, his conclusions were not far short of the mark. I have heard of starving men chewing shoe-leather, so when we strove to add more hares to our larder it cannot be wondered at. It was difficult to reach the hare-runs, but having plenty of time at our disposal we persevered until some half a dozen traps had been set. These traps consisted of a noose placed in a slanting position on a pronged stick to keep it firm. The end was

fastened to a neighbouring bough. The noose dropped over the hare-path, so that it would catch the head of the animal as it proceeded to its feeding-ground. The following day our labours were rewarded with two fine catches. On the fourth day a severe frost set in, and the melting slush became a gigantic field of glossy ice, so slippery, that Herbert had six falls before he returned from the hare-traps. To enable us to walk, we skinned the hares and bound the fur to our feet. The sudden change in the weather was extremely trying, and the slippery condition of the path made us both warm. Nothing, perhaps, is more tiring than a journey over smooth ice. Almost every step is accompanied by a slide of a few inches, and occasionally, when walking carelessly, one finds oneself on the verge of losing the equilibrium, and sustaining a bad accident. The mind, therefore, is kept in a state of tension all day. This is not only worrying, but fatiguing, and soon brings the perspiration upon the brow. It appeared that during the night there had been a few showers of rain, and this was followed by what is called "a silver frost."

"During early spring," writes a celebrated English traveller, "the following is not a rare

occurrence : A shower of rain is rapidly succeeded by severe frost, called 'silver frost,' when the bare boughs of the deciduous-leaved trees and evergreens become encrusted with ice, presenting a very striking and beautiful appearance in sunlight, just as if they were composed of as many twigs of crystal, sparkling most splendidly. But the effect is often fatal to the garden fruit-trees, and such as are not natives of the region. I was assured by a gentleman of much experience in horticulture, that the plum-trees introduced into the province from Europe rarely produce fruit, and seem to deteriorate rapidly into stunted growths, gnarled and covered with excrescences. The effects of the cold winters and hot summers of Canada are, however, notorious with respect to such as, for instance, the apple-tree, which has at length got so acclimatised that individuals imported to England, although seemingly not affected by the change in any way, cannot be got to produce ripe fruit, for the reason that the summers are not hot enough."

It may be asked, "How do hunters, trappers, and Indians find their way from place to place without landmark or guide?" "The Indians," states Long (*Voyages and Travels*, page 28,

1791), "pay little attention to the rising or setting sun, which at first surprised me, because I wondered by what method they travel from place to place, without any material aberration : but this they soon explained, by assuring me that they had not the least difficulty in going from one spot to another, being guided by the moss on the trees, which always remains on the north side, but on the south it wastes and decays : they remark also that the branches are larger, and the leaves more luxuriant on the south than on the north side of the tree. The most enlightened part of mankind, I am persuaded, cannot be more exact in their mode of judging, nor more attentive to works of Nature.

"To prove further," he adds, "that the Indians possess strong natural abilities, I shall relate a story from Kalin's *Travels*.

"An old American savage being at an inn at New York, met with a gentleman who gave him some liquor, and being rather lively, boasted he could read and write English. The gentleman, willing to indulge him in displaying his knowledge, begged leave to propose a question, to which the old man consented. He was then asked, who was the first circumcised ? The Indian imme-

diately replied, "Father Abraham" ; and directly asked the gentleman, who was the first Quaker ? He said it was very uncertain, that people differed in their sentiments exceedingly. The Indian perceiving the gentleman unable to solve the question, put his fingers into his mouth, to express his surprise, and, looking steadfastly, told him that Mordecai was the first Quaker, for he would not pull off his hat to Haman.' "

Mr. Adair says : " The Cherokees are apt at giving people nicknames. A dull stalking fellow they call a turkey buzzard ; an ill-tempered man, a wasp ; a talkative person, a grasshopper ; a hoarse voice, they say, resembles a bull ; and an interpreter whose manners and conversation are obscene, they call a smock interpreter. The disposition of Indians is naturally proud and self-sufficient : they think themselves the wisest of the sons of men, and are extremely offended when their advice is rejected."

About noon the sun shone brightly, but a strange stillness seemed to take possession of the woods. There was not a breath of wind, and when we spoke our voices seemed to jar upon us. This stillness communicated itself to the nerves, and though, apparently, there was

no cause for it, we both found ourselves fidgety and anxious as though some awful calamity was about to happen. Sometimes we gazed at each other meaningly and then up at the sky. Round the sun was a curious shadowy haze. This haze was neither a London fog nor a white mist, and yet it appeared a mixture of both with a peculiarity of its own. The solemn silence became unbearable—it was literally a silence “that could be felt.” We were walking rapidly, and knew, as though by instinct, that a few more hours would bring us to the large lake. This fact should have had the effect of raising our spirits and creating a sense of safety, but our faces bore a contrary expression, and appeared like the sullen despairing features of men about to be slain.

How strange is this warning voice of Nature ! During my last visit (1902), while travelling through a portion of forest-land in Maryland, U.S.A., I had the misfortune to lose my way, and drove on hopelessly lost through a blinding rain until daylight dawned. It was about four o'clock in the morning when I realised a sudden sense of danger. It was so dark that I could not see the horse's head, and had not the remotest idea of the locality. The horse stood still, and

refused to move. Though an admonitory voice forbade me, yet I shook off its influence and struck the horse with the whip ; the only result was his trembling that shook the buggy. I then cautiously stepped out, and found myself on the brink of a precipice ; another yard would have been certain death.

The atmosphere became more and more oppressive and it was difficult to breathe. A sickly kind of warmth seemed to pass over us in clouds—occasionally changing to a sense of icy coldness. Then this extraordinary phenomenon disappeared, and it was followed by another awful silence. All surrounding space was hushed ; organic and inorganic matter seemed to respond to a powerful command. We did not speak, we knew full well what was coming. At first, sounds were faintly heard that would be impossible for me to describe. One might have fancied an express train was rushing toward us, followed by numerous others that had become derailed and were tearing a path through mountain, rock, and forest. It was the approaching cyclone. Trees, rocks, earth, and snow were hurled along during its terrible progress, and we—stunned, deafened, and scared—lay at full length upon the ground. This

fiendish hurricane vanished almost as quickly as it had burst upon us ; but the wind rising, caught up the snow, and hurled it on its way in blinding, whirling eddies.

This snow penetrated everything, neither clothing nor sheltering tree could resist it, it blinded our eyes, filled our nostrils, and clogged the lungs. In a few minutes we were both encased in its freezing folds, and, notwithstanding our muffled necks and thick fur-collars, cold streams of water trickled down our backs. The noise and din were such that neither could hear the other speak, and the storm, raging round our faces, shut out all recognisable forms. Plunging onward, we both became lost to view in the dense white clouds of snowy dust. An overwhelming desire to sleep took possession of me, though I knew that such a longing, if gratified, would mean certain death. More than once I stumbled and fell, having no energy to rise, and unable to narrate the circumstances that found me once more battling on. In this half-blinded and stupefied state I continued for about an hour, feeling more dead than alive, and moving mechanically like some piece of clockwork machinery. The ground was in places almost

bare, and elsewhere piled up with several feet of snow. More than once I collided with a huge tree and received painful blows ; but as time went on, these sufferings ceased, and I became conscious that the nature of the ground had changed. Some idea can be formed of the density of the snow when I state that I could neither see my feet nor a yard ahead. When danger has passed, one is apt think of one's friends. For my part the welfare of Herbert never entered my mind ; possibly the nerves and brain were too benumbed to enable me to think. Even the ambition to live had vanished, and the struggle was more physical than rational and predetermined. The clouds of snow occasionally lifted, and became in appearance lighter and more transparent. These half-lulls were followed by whirlwinds of snow, each darker and fiercer than its predecessor. I trembled fearfully at every repeated sign of a cessation, believing that these swiftly following snow-clouds would ultimately destroy me. They did not last long—barely perhaps a minute, but to me the sufferings and dread of them rendered the time incalculable. It was at the end of one of these terrible outbursts of the storm that I found myself

fainting and choked, and, had another attacked me, I could not possibly have weathered it. But this cloud as dark as night proved to be the last, and when I opened my eyes and looked around, the storm had entirely ceased.

My delight can be understood when I say that the spot upon which I had fallen was the lake where I lived. Herbert had fared better than I had done, for I saw him walking ahead and about to enter a shanty. I tried to shout to him, but a strange stinging pain in my throat made the effort difficult. I struggled to my feet, but only tottered a few paces before I fell, and here I remained until Herbert found me half-unconscious in the snow.

I have survived two cyclones. One in Canada, and another at Mount Vernon, Illinois. In the latter place large houses and buildings of stone were swept away from the path of the cyclone like a pack of cards, and many lives were lost. I have recalled all the impressions made upon my mind during these terrible experiences.

The following is an account of a winter's night I spent alone upon an island situated upon a frozen lake:—

“The distance to this rugged island was

several hundred yards from the one I had left. The rock was perpendicular on the western side near the base, and the huge stones above appeared like tumbled houses. I walked to the other side, and discovered a dense wood, and noted that the heights could be reached with the aid of the trees.

“It was a rough and wearying conclusion to the day’s adventures, and when I reached the last tree I paused to take breath. Viewed from the water, the top of the hill appeared absolutely inaccessible, but when once reached it was found to be exactly the opposite. Between huge boulders were collected dry sticks, sand, and stones, and so gradual did this render the ascent that the climbing became easy. As I advanced a few paces, the path became blocked by a huge rock, but it was so indented by exposure to the weather that natural steps had been formed. When I had scrambled to the top of this I discovered a well-sheltered hollow where I could safely pass the night. My chief danger was freezing to death, so I collected all the wood I could find, and soon had a blazing fire. This light must have appeared like a beacon for miles. I felt, however, perfectly safe in my retreat. It was,

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